



# **Final Evaluation Report**

*of the Project*

“Support for Education in Post Conflict Southeastern  
Myanmar“

(SEE NORAD)

econAn International

*Myanmar*

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Last but not least, it is my hope that the insights shared and recommendations given in this report will contribute to the education projects successful implementation in ADRA's target communities.

## Abbreviations

ACS	Adventist Community Service
ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
BLS	Baseline Survey
CBO	Community Based Organization
CESR	Comprehensive Education Sector Review
DHAWG	Donor-Humanitarian Actors Working Group
EAG	Ethnic Armed Groups
EAGs	Ethnic Actor Groups
GoM	Government of Myanmar
GTE	General Teacher Evaluation (KTWG tool for evaluating teachers)
IDPs	Internal Displaced Persons
ILO	International Labor Organization
INGO	International Non-Government Organization (also NGO)
KED	Karen Education Department
KNU	Karen National Union
KSEAG	Karen State Education Assistance Group
KSED	Karen State Education Department
KTWG	Karen Teacher Working Group
LF	Logical framework (Log frame)
MOE	Ministry of Education
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTT	Mobile Teacher Trainer
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NNER	National Network for Education Reform
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OVI	Overall Verifiable Indicator
PMT	Project Management Team
PTA	Parents-Teacher Association
PwD	Persons with Disabilities
SDA	Seventh-day Adventist (Church)
SMC	School Management Committee
TOT	Training of Trainers

## Executive Summary

The Project “Support for Education in Post Conflict Southeastern Myanmar (SEE NORAD)” funded by NORAD was implemented by the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Adventist Community Services (ACS), and Karen Teachers Working Group (KTWG) throughout the Southeast of Myanmar between January 2013 and December 2013. The goal of the project was to support quality and ethical sensitive education that will contribute to promote peace and integration among various ethnic groups. The initial one year pilot project was supported by NORAD and ADRA UK with a total of \$632.000 USD.

This document presents the findings of a final evaluation of the SEE NORAD Project, executed in March/April 2014. The evaluation was carried out by an independent evaluator of *econAN International*, a Myanmar & Germany based consultancy, and has been conducted according to the following six criteria: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Sustainability and Cross-cutting issues.

The project had two key component objectives:

Component Objective 1: “Children in Southeastern Myanmar enjoy quality basic education.”

Component Objective 2: “Ethnic education actors and other stakeholders cooperate together in an inclusive way in the scope of the ongoing education reform process.”

ADRA Myanmar’s education project has conducted direct interventions in Hlaingbwe Township (Paingkyon Area), of the Hpa-An District. ADRA directly supported the rebuilding or reconstruction of 18 primary schools and equipped 3.412 students from 48 schools with student learning materials/sets and 110 teachers with teacher sets. The challenges faced throughout this initial pilot project phase were largely linked to the fact that the agency entered a new intervention area. To rebuild 18 primary schools in government-controlled areas (12) and NSAG-controlled areas (6) in a limited period of time brought up the challenge of adequate community involvement. Necessary government permission for entering the areas were delayed and resulted in high team pressure to finish the implementation within the given project lifetime.

The second component objective of the project achieved a good level of relationships with government officials and was able to reach its target OVIs to strengthen and enhance dialog platforms amongst ethnic education leaders, community-based organizations as KTWG/ACS and other stakeholders as the GoM. Beneficiaries broadly confirmed a positive development of a dialog and mutual trust across various ethnic backgrounds. Thus, the objective to enable education leaders to engage in the CESR process to promote ethnic aspects in the reform process has been fulfilled in the sense that initiation and facilitation was successful. The aim is to continuously assess possibilities for an alignment of the different education systems that will finally promote peace and integration among various ethnic groups. Despite the fact that the GoM did not officially formulate the full active integration of ethnic education leaders throughout the review process, the project still achieved their active participation in the CESR discussions. However, despite the overall achievements and fulfillment of indicators of component 2, the development of a Framework of Cooperation between ethnic education leaders has not been reached yet. The level of trust-building relations between GoM and ethnic educational leaders still needs to be qualified with promising perspectives as it is still in its infant stage. Therefore, existing relationships need to be sensitively nurtured through future interventions.

The limited access to the project target areas prevented necessary monitoring visits and community mobilization. All main indicators have been sufficiently fulfilled. Project components' OVIs also fulfill the required standard according to the SMART criteria. However, due to time constraints and lack of clear definitions of the project's quality criteria (result 3 under component 1), the achievement of certain quality parameter fell short. It has been evaluated as a considerable limitation that only KTWG has a fully functioning M&E system for teacher monitoring and coaching at its disposal while the inclusion of component 2 indicators was missing. In addition, ADRA's basic data file does not provide progress information, e.g. a clear overview about dialogue platform progress. As information about the outputs of indicators was only available through partner reports and the project end report, the overall qualitative relevance of all indicators was reduced. The absence of qualitative data on valuable community interactions in the M&E system reduces the significance of the fulfillment of indicators. When quantitative and qualitative data, available at the partners level, are integrated into the overall project M&E system, the significance of the project evaluation will considerably increase.

In partnership with ethnic education entities (ACS and KTWG), the intervention area covered Kayin State and selected Mon State communities. These entities are engaged in conducting regular teacher training sessions for more than 2.400 teachers from over 740 schools. The teacher training is a comprehensive student-centered curriculum, delivered by experienced teacher trainers with follow-up and mentoring sessions. Beneficiaries broadly confirmed the improvement of teaching quality and reported that important issues and teaching contents have been addressed. Despite a quite comprehensive theme catalog of ToT topics, there can be a stronger focus on 'inclusiveness' and environmental issues' in the future. While beneficiaries generally perceived the ToTs as stimulating, the training participants also remarked a lack of group interaction and follow-up trainings at school sites. In addition, the ToT sessions were regularly challenged by limited resources and logistics, basically referring to the potential for cross-organizational learning between ACS and KTWG and an improved support for building up local CBOs.

SEE NORAD overall fully achieved and even exceeded required project targets within the allocated budget and time frame. All of the seven indicators defined for the four result areas have been met. The project evaluation was able to identify an increase of student enrollment by 13 % for the school year 2013-2014 throughout the target area. With an overwhelming unity, evaluation participants confirmed the overall relevance of the project and the conviction that the project has contributed to peace and integration among various ethnic groups. Thus, the overall results of this project after only one year intervention are remarkable. However, the evaluator realized that the timing of the evaluation was undesirable. The fact that it took place during the school break already indicates a general delay for this urgent assessment. The general delay of the evaluation implies that findings and results may have little influence on the project design of the second project phase as it might already have been written.

Finally, it can be said that the evaluation study allows the assumption that the support for teacher training as well as the provision of student learning materials, combined with the refurbishment of 18 schools, contributed to an increased motivation among parents to get involved in education affairs. The second significant project result has a future orientation and implication. Through the initiated dialogue platform, ADRA facilitated several meetings between the GoM and other ethnic education leaders. There is great hope that the next project phase will continue the success line and use the available findings from the pilot project evaluation report and consider its recommendations.

## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Evaluation

### *Socio-political context of the project target area*

Decades of conflict between the former military regime in Myanmar and Ethnic Armed Groups (EAG) in Southeast Myanmar have created a vast number of internal displaced persons (IDPs) as well as refugees who live in refugee camps along the border in Thailand. Throughout the year 2012, several ceasefires were negotiated between the Government of Myanmar (GoM) and EAGs. This raises the hope that the conflict will cease and pave the way toward sustainable development for conflict-affected communities in Southeast Myanmar. The project target area is characterized by the fact that government social services have been unable to penetrate these areas. Therefore, the level of development and access to basic services such as clean water, sanitation, health care and education is very low or non-existent. Despite the signing of preliminary ceasefires, large parts of the Southeast region remain under the control of EAGs. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the GoM will gain access to these areas until the peace process matures and a genuine political dialogue commences. During the years of armed conflicts, education has been repeatedly disrupted in affected areas while it is estimated that less than 50% of all children in those regions complete primary education.<sup>1</sup> According to TBC figures<sup>2</sup> a third of the children between 5-12 years of age living in rural communities in those conflict affected areas regularly miss out on school and consequently, do not complete primary education. This observation is confirmed by the finding that nearly one out of five Asian children aged five to fourteen are working.<sup>3</sup>

Despite the fact that the current ceasefire is a positive sign and may help parents to send their children more regularly to a community school, it is more likely that the widespread poverty prevents many children from attending school. This been said, it is important to note that the family can be considered as a unit of production similar to a firm in which one member of the household makes decisions about the allocation of resources and tasks to maximize productivity and efficiency. In times when cash or resources are scarce, it's likely that children are involved in the economy of caring out work like looking after siblings, housework, caring for animals, collecting water, etc. According to the ILO, worldwide one out of five children are involved in production either for the market or for their own use.<sup>4</sup> In fact, the evaluator's field experience and parents' feedback throughout this project evaluation also underline the notion that enrollment fees and the lack of resources to buy school uniforms do play a significant role in preventing children from school attendance. It is also a well-known matter of fact that a serious lack of middle- and high schools in the conflict affected border region simply 'forces' children into the realm of household economics.

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<sup>1</sup>ADRA Myanmar, *Support for Education in Post Conflict Southeastern Myanmar*, SEE NORAD Project Proposal, 2012

<sup>2</sup>The Border Consortium, *Poverty, Displacement and Local Governance in Southeast Myanmar*, 15.

<sup>3</sup>Karen Wells, *Childhood in a Global Perspective*, 100

<sup>4</sup>Karen Wells, *Childhood in a Global Perspective*, 99

Many communities in the remote areas have selected their community school teachers and taken ownership of sustaining basic education in their communities.

However, the teachers seldom had the chance to complete and graduate from High School themselves. According to KED statistics, there are currently more than 6.100 teachers working in over 1.200 schools throughout Karen National Union (KNU) and other NSAGs controlled areas.<sup>5</sup> For more than 15 years, KTWG, religious groups such as ACS and other individuals have supported most ethnic community schools. In this context, KTWG maintains the largest support network with Mobile Teacher Trainers (MTT), reaching out to non-state actors' controlled areas on a regular basis. This Community Based Organization (CBO) as an entity is dedicated to support education across several ethnic groups with location in the areas controlled by EAG's. In fact, ACS pursues a slightly similar strategy. The idea behind educational support for communities, is to integrate education as one part of community development. Thus, it has been identified as an effective way to increase the level of hope in people and to stabilize their chances to sustain future livelihoods. Through the partnerships with KTWG and ACS, ADRA aimed to reach out into the areas controlled by armed non-state actor where the prolonged conflict situation affected basic education opportunities.

The negotiated ceasefire between the GoM and EAGs has created hope for a peace settlement in the near future that will pave the way for supporting and improving education opportunities in the region.

### ***Project framework***

The Southeastern Education (SEE) project aimed to support the provision of quality basic education in Southeastern Myanmar by supporting the continuity of basic education support. This was delivered both within Myanmar through *Adventist Community Service* (ACS) in Karen and Mon ethnic communities and from across the border by the KTWG in other non-government controlled areas of Karen State. At the same time, ADRA Myanmar initiated education support in the strategic area of Hlaingbwe Township (Paingkyon Area) of Karen State, a mostly government-controlled area. Additional support was given to students and teachers by providing selected learning materials (teacher and student kits from Result 2 Log frame Indicators) that aimed to cover material needs and increase school attendance and motivation.

As the GoM has started on an ambitious education reform process that aims at fast tracking the country's social and economic development until 2015,<sup>6</sup> there is an urgent need that ethnic education leaders and the GoM work on durable solutions for the integration of ethnic identity into the education system to support the overall peace process. In addition to support for immediate basic education needs in Southeastern Myanmar, the project focused on the future and initiated and facilitated a dialogue among key education sector leaders in order to ensure the participation of ethnic groups and the representation of ethnic education issues in the reform process.

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<sup>5</sup>KED Statistics, academic year 2013-14

<sup>6</sup>CapEFA, *Consultant – Education Legislation and Decentralized Education Management*, Terms of Reference, 2012



### ***SEE NORAD Project Goal***

The education system in South-Eastern Myanmar offers quality and ethnically sensitive education, which will contribute to promoting peace and integration among various ethnic groups.

### ***SEENORAD Project Objectives (Outcome)***

Component 1: Children in South Eastern Myanmar enjoy quality basic education

Component 2: Ethnic education actors and other stakeholders cooperate together in an inclusive way within the scope of the ongoing education reform process.

### ***Evaluation Aim and Scope of Study***

This evaluation report aims to document project results, to provide opportunities for reflection and lessons learned, and to inform about potential modifications for future projects. Further details are noted in the Terms of Reference.<sup>7</sup> The scope of the evaluation for ADRA's SEE NORAD project, implemented from January 2013 to December 2013, is aligned with provided guidelines given by the Terms of References (TOR) and the OECD/DAC evaluation guidelines<sup>8</sup> and assesses the following criteria:

- Quality and Relevance of the project design;
- Effectiveness;
- Efficiency of planning and implementation;
- Impact;
- Sustainability;
- Cross-cutting issues;

In this context, the evaluation also assesses intended and unintended impact from project interventions as well as project partnerships with key stakeholders, including government relations. Insights into cross-cutting issues such as gender, conflict sensitivity, and strengthening of civil society actors are part of the assessment as well. Finally, conclusions about M & E structures and project-/risk management are assessed elements for 'added value'.

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<sup>7</sup>Terms of References to the SEE NORAD Project; see Annex 3

<sup>8</sup>OECD DAC Network on Development Evaluation: *Evaluating Development Co-operation*; Summary of Key Norms and Standards, Second Edition 2010, 13-14

## ***Evaluation Methodology***

The evaluation was conducted over four overlapping stages: a) document review, b) data gathering, c) data analysis and d) report writing. In order to uncover important elements and to highlight information about relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability, including cross-cutting issues, guiding questions were developed and used.

During the first phase, project documents and reports were reviewed, collated and structured according to given evaluation criteria. The information was also used to prepare questions for semi-structured interviews with key informants and focus groups. The results were then triangulated in order to test one source of information against another to strip away alternative explanations,<sup>9</sup> thus providing a higher level of objectivity and completeness. In fact, triangulation works with any topic, in any setting, and on any level of research and assessments.<sup>10</sup> The evaluation study used participatory methods to engage project implementation staff, partner organizations, stakeholders and beneficiaries in order to assess the overall performance of the project. For the semi-structured interviews, questions were prepared beforehand to guide the discussion but also to create space for spontaneous responses and comments, reflecting the project-related experience of interviewees.

Overall, the research design and its application represent a mixed method approach, seeking to capture qualitative and quantitative data that would be considered valuable for the organization. The focus group discussions were conducted on two days and included more than 120 individuals; 11 teachers (1M), 50 parents (either mother or father) and 62 students, (45 girls, 17 boys). The selection of beneficiary groups (parents, students, and teachers) was made according to their availability. Because the evaluation took place during school summer break, the partial absence of students and teachers diminished their potential availability. With regard to the selection process of the FGD, taking place in the ADRA office in Hpa-An, ADRA themselves identified the group from the Hlaingbwe Township. However, the villagers themselves decided about who would finally travel to Hpa-An in order to participate in the FGD. From this earlier mentioned township, 4 teachers, 7 parents and 11 students finally came and attended the meeting. The second focus group event took place in the Mae Phra village. This village was selected by ADRA to build a new school. As this area is a government-controlled area, the respective government offices selected those who would accompany the evaluation team, namely the evaluator, assistant and interpreter, accompanied by three ADRA team members. For the FGD in the Mae Phra village, all students and teachers, including 5 government teachers from neighboring schools, attended the group meeting. The length of the focus group discussions varied between 1-2 hours. While the evaluator aimed to engage parents in groups and teachers in groups, the approach for the children was slightly different. After some warm-up questions to build rapport, suitable materials were handed out to engage the children in visual research (drawings).

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<sup>9</sup> David M. Fetterman. *Ethnography: Step by Step* (Los Angeles, Sage Publications), 94.

<sup>10</sup>Fetterman, *Ethnography: Step by Step*, 95.

## Chapter 2: Performance Assessments

### *Relevance and Quality of Project Design*

The appropriateness of the project's objectives in accordance to beneficiaries' perceptions of the current education system, priorities to interventions and the quality of the project design to meet identified objectives

The move towards the GoM's education reform agenda is marked by the overall national educational strategy. With the "*Comprehensive Education Sector Review*" (CESR) process (2012-2014), the GoM and its Ministry of Education (MoE) envisions Myanmar's society to become "*a learning society capable of facing the challenges of the Knowledge Age.*" With the goal to build "*a modern developed nation through education,*"<sup>11</sup> objectives for the CESR are framed by an inclusive and participatory approach to involve a wide range of education stakeholders. However, the recognition of ethnic education actors and leaders in their role in the review primarily refers to their participation in the Rapid Assessment of stakeholders' perceptions and priorities. In other words, CESR guidelines do not explicitly strive for an active and equal cooperation of ministry-based education stakeholders and ethnic education actors in the scope of the ongoing education reform process.

At this stage of peace and reconciliation in Myanmar, there is little doubt that the role of ethnic national education systems and the development of an inclusive education system are crucial. However, GoM's current approach towards convergence about full cooperation of all education stakeholders raised questions about the relevance of the project's overall goal, Logical Framework and choice of place of intervention. The evaluator got the general impression that deliberate dialog between ADRA and GoM over the project's development goal was not sufficiently taking place. Extensive dialog with participants of MoE might have revealed more information about the actual government's perspective and potential support of ethnic community-led strategies and action plans to advocate for ethnic education needs, prior to proposal writing and project development. The factors leading to the final choice of the place of intervention (target area) remained unclear because there was no full information about the choice of area available. The fact that the GoM kept the project implementation for eight months in suspense indicates that a clear and sufficient communication over the project intervention area was not in place.

With regards to the objectives of the CESR, it needs to be realized that the overarching goal of GoM currently emphasizes economic development and a modern developed nation through education. In this context, it seems that the project's goal of quality education is currently more appreciated and thus perceived as 'relevant' than the goal of ethnically sensitive education. However, the project evaluation estimated full relevance of the Logical Framework, including project goal and objectives, because component 1 and 2 initiated a 'bottom-up' development of needed elements for quality and ethnically sensitive education. Furthermore, both project components substantially contributed to an initial step towards increasing convergence of ethnic education actors and other education stakeholders, and thus towards promoting peace and integration among various ethnic groups.

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<sup>11</sup>Ministry of Education (MoE), *Terms of Reference for Myanmar Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR)*, 2012

However, a few critical points need to be made. The project proposal refers to “a range of challenges involved in ensuring that the recently initiated CESR provides access to quality ethnically sensitive education throughout Southeastern Myanmar.” This concern is followed by the assertion that “this project will enable ethnic community leaders and other education stakeholders to engage in the CESR process so as to promote the education needs of ethnic groups in the reform process.”<sup>12</sup> Such overzealous promises run danger to reduce the overall strength of project relevance. In order to achieve long-term trust relationships between all education stakeholders and the integration of current ethnic education curricula into the overall framework of the national education system, this evaluation likes to emphasize the crucial importance that ADRA actively (including written documents) models a participatory way of action and mutual learning towards the goal of an inclusive education system.

The Southeastern Education project was implemented within less than one year’s time. Through the partnership with ACS and KTWG, the project could partially reach conflict-affected target communities in the Karen (Kayin) State and Mon State. While it is a well-known matter of fact to all interviewees of the project that children in conflict-affected areas encounter major obstacles in school education, evaluation participants commonly agreed on the overall relevance of the project intervention.

The evaluation team observed evidence of educational needs at individual and household levels, which the project was able to address. In other words, partners and stakeholders responded positively to refurbishment and renovation of school buildings and equipping children and teachers with learning and teaching material and school supply. Interviews and focus groups revealed an increased level of parents’ compliance with their children’s school attendance during project phase 1, which further emphasizes the appropriateness of the project’s objectives. These findings are particularly underlined by the *Support for Education in Southeastern Myanmar Baseline Report for ADRA Myanmar*, describing how the education sector has become a victim of conflict for several decades in Myanmar. Because enrollment numbers indicated a high drop-out rate at primary school level, the author of the Baseline Report alerts to the immediate need to improve the quality of basic education in the target area. In this context, ADRA, KTWG and ACS are also advised to support the education reform process in order to stabilize ethnic sensitive education as an integrative part of the national education system.<sup>13</sup> The project design is finally based on these assumptions while partners were informed and familiarized with the Overall Objectives (OO) and details of the planned intervention after the project design phase.

However, the project teams had to deal with the government’s unexpected request to build two new school buildings in a government-controlled area. Thus, ADRA had to revise the initial project budget. The request of the government to build two new schools instead of repairing/refurbishing those schools occurred after the project budget was approved. When the decision was made to meet the government expectation, ADRA revised the budget to ensure the inclusion of the additional costs for these two new schools. At this point, ADRA also integrated village contributions to ensure an overall coverage of the costs. This unexpected event challenged the agency to bridge the budget gap and to implement planned activities within the confines of the curtailed timeframe.

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<sup>12</sup>ADRA Myanmar SEE Project Proposal, 8.

<sup>13</sup>Tim Schroeder, *Support for Education in Southeastern Myanmar Baseline Report for ADRA Myanmar*, 2013.

ADRA staff and other Interview partners indicated that there was no initial or sufficient discussion over the implementation area taking place. That resulted in difficulties establishing project implementation details with government authorities prior to actual implementation. Staff members recognized the importance of a dialog between all stakeholders as one major lesson learned. Furthermore, a few interviewees raised their concern regarding the relevance of the design of the school buildings. Subject of their concern was the exact location for toilets, access to water and the teacher's room. Those elements were not included in the design of the building. Similar to this concern was the critique in the relevance of the distribution of the teacher's kit. The teacher's kit contained 1 bag, 1 umbrella, 1 sarong and 1 shirt. Additionally, government teachers received a teacher's uniform. During the interviews, ACS teachers (*KTWG supported teachers likely would respond in a similar way*) briefly mentioned the irrelevance of these items and expressed their hope to receive better sets of teaching aids such as globe, maps, posters (visual aids) and writing materials. These rather critical perceptions about relevance revealed a gap between the actual needs and the provided items. The response of some interviewees about this topic was the recommendation "to consult teachers before a teacher's kit prototype is arranged" provides an additional lesson learned about the importance of a need analysis prior to implementation.

### **Effectiveness**

The contribution made by the project's results (as in "outcomes") to the achievement of the project goal.
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The evaluator observed sufficient evidence that the project achieved anticipated results that paved the way for the next long-term project phase. As stated under the outcome for the Component 2, the provision of dialog platforms for ethnic education actors and other stakeholders will enhance cooperation. During the onsite evaluation assessments, all participants' reports, testimonies and interactions evidently proved that trust relationships have started to grow between ethnic communities (target communities), NGO's and the GoM. Nevertheless, the individual willingness and compliance of each project team member to work effectively within the confines of government authorization essentially contributed to a successful implementation of project phase 1. In this context the SEE project played a vital role in helping the GoM to gain further trust in formerly mixed-controlled areas. Villagers expressed their hope for continued interventions (e.g. Middle School) that would further improve the education sector and chances for their children to complete education with at least Grade 8.

The facilitation of meetings with ethnic community leaders, NGOs and GoM authorities fundamentally supported positive relationships of project team members with government officials as well as between government representatives and ethnic education leaders. All interview partners from both sides (GoM, KTWG/KED) praised the opportunities for communication through the dialogue platform and expressed their hopes for more chances in near future. The evaluator took note that ADRA succeeded to build an initial bridge between the government and ethnic education actors within a short period of time.

This also revealed that the proposal’s assumption “ethnic stakeholders will feel engaged and that there is political avenue through which they can raise their concerns”<sup>14</sup> through established dialog platforms was true.

Available data to the objective 1 overall verified indicator (OVIs) illuminate a significant increase in students’ enrollment. The data for the 2013-14 school year as provided by KED<sup>15</sup> was compared with the enrollment figures from the academic year 2012-2013 stated in the Baseline Survey data<sup>16</sup>. The comparison shows an enrollment increase by 13 percent. In the Log frame (hereafter LF), a 5% increase in the gross enrolment rate was set as an indicator. As indicated in the table, the numbers of teachers and schools have also increased.

<b>Time</b>	<b>No. of schools</b>	<b>No. of teachers</b>	<b>No. of students</b>	<b>Student/Teacher ratio</b>
Year 2012-13	1,264	5,579	125,253	22.45
Year 2013-14	1,295	6,156	141,704	23.02
Increase	31	577	16,451 (13%)	

However, more research is necessary to identify all underlying causes for this significant increase in students’ enrolment. When the evaluator posed questions about reasons for increased children’s school participation to the parents, teachers, and village leaders, they indicated that since the time of ceasefire, more parents feel encouraged to send their children to school. But surely this is probably only one of the factors that provoke such an increase.

The target percentage of teachers receiving ToT as the second OVI of component 1 was achieved and through KTWG training activities overachieved. While all ACS supported teachers received summer break training (100% achieved), KTWG statistics demonstrate that the 25% target figure of teachers who would receive ToT finally reached 40%. Due to KTWG’s experience in training and monitoring teachers in remote areas, it can be said that the set target of 25% was quite conservative. Despite a possible conservative indicator, the result indicates the effective work done by KTWG. In fact, this finding consolidates the finding of the Baseline Report, saying that investing in Karen Teachers through trainings provided by KTWG/KSEAG will not only meet the immediate need to improve the quality of basic education in the target area but will also support the education reform process by creating a pool of trained teachers that can be possibly integrated into a national and ethnic sensitive education system in the future.<sup>17</sup> The KTWG CBO maintains a well-tuned Mobile Teacher Training (MTT) system and has provided training and follow-up monitoring for more than 2.400 teachers (OVI 5 of component 1).

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<sup>14</sup>ADRA Myanmar, SEE NORAD Project Logframe

<sup>15</sup>KED enrollment statistics for the academic year 2013-14

<sup>16</sup>Tim Schroeder, *Support for Education in Southeastern Myanmar Baseline Report for ADRA Myanmar*, 2013, Table 10, p 19

<sup>17</sup>Schroeder, Baseline Report, 21.

Further details to the ToT sessions were available in project end reports of ACS and KTWG. Assessing the one month intensive ToT training schedule, the partners ACS and KTWG incorporated similar training topics that cover following aspects: reading, writing and creative thinking, child psychology, teaching methods, primary health care (malaria prevention & nutrition), teaching English, art/crafts, classroom management, and administration. Despite the fact that the ToT training theme list is quite comprehensive already, a focus should also be given to inclusiveness and environmental issues. In this context it would be helpful when ADRA encourages both entities to share their ToT training materials for mutual learning. The evaluation did not identify any hint about training material that was shared.

The fulfillment of the indicators and activities of the result level of component 1 consumed significant time portions and energy of the project team. Within this few months period, the team had to manage to refurbish/ reconstruct 18 schools, to purchase 3.412 students' kits and 110 teachers' kits. Despite the good initial start of the project towards adequately equipping classrooms, the expected Result 2 of Component 1 *"Teachers and students are adequately equipped with teaching and learning materials"* seems to have been too ambitious for the project duration of just ten months. Further, the quality aspect to this result is not defined in commonly understandable terms. While the set goal of distribution (numbers) has been achieved, the quality aspect has neither been clarified nor been fulfilled by the project. Due to the fact that ADRA and Save the Children both implement basic education programs, it has been a strategic decision to cooperate. In order to achieve OVI 2 of component 2, *"Education leaders' workshops conducted"*, ADRA cooperated well with Save the Children and facilitated the workshops between education stakeholders as KTWG, KED, ACS and the GoM, represented by KSED. According to the project end report, three meetings with ethnic education leaders as well as three meetings including representatives from the GoM were held in Myanmar and facilitated by ADRA and Save the Children.

### **Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation System**

The M&E arrangements for the ADRA Myanmar SEE Project were perceived by several staff members as a weak point of the project. There were challenges mentioned with the aspect of effectiveness, in particular in the area of report design, which includes the need for available qualitative and quantitative data from outputs and results. Quarterly report design is linked to an effective M&E system, which shall enable the provision of all data from all activities and its progress to date. The assessed data files provided by the project management team and team self-reflections indicate that essential information are missing. Thus, the evaluation assessment identified that ADRA maintains a basic but incomplete data file, which does not provide progress information about other achievements such as repaired/refurbished schools or conducted teacher training sessions while effective links to the partners' M&E system have not been put in place.

The inclusion of the component 2 indicators in the M&E system was missing. In addition, a large part of the partners' activities and their results as well as a clear overview about the dialogue platform progress was not documented. Furthermore, information to outputs for these indicators, only available through the partners' reports and the project end report. Qualitative data, such as success stories about the project team's interaction with communities, was not part of the M&E system.

The assessment and discussion with KTWG reveals that the CBO maintains a well-managed database (M&E system) in which all relevant data on more than 6.100 teachers are captured. Regarding qualitative data availability in the M&E system, KTWG produces video clips, receives letters from teachers (personal stories) and conducts interviews. KTWG also maintains a well-developed and effective tool (*General Teacher Evaluation Booklet*) which is used by MTTs to monitor and motivate community teachers on an ongoing basis.

Evaluation investigations revealed that ACS also maintains an effective database that provides information about its supported school-network to place teachers respectively, including basic student data. Both CBOs herewith currently follow good practice standards and demonstrate evidence for professional capacity to effectively deliver data at demand. The agency partners ACS and KTWG delivered monthly and/or quarterly reports to the project management (PM, PC) whose task was to integrate the provided information into the M&E system and the final progress reports. A challenge occurred when due to running activities or other reasons, data from ACS and KTWG partners could not be provided on time. Overall it can be summarized that qualitative and quantitative data available at partner level has not been integrated into the overall project M&E system.

### **Staffing, management and cooperation with the counterpart organizations**

Interviewees reported that ADRA maintained regular communication with the partner CBOs through the dialogue platform of component 2. However, a limitation has been identified in the fact that there had been no official schedule put in place for regular and re-occurring meetings of the project management level with those who were in overall charge of the teacher training sessions. While financial support for the CBOs covered the costs for conducting ToT sessions only, the feedback of ACS in particular gave insight in their limitations for independent and effective action. They reported about a lack of means to cover administration and other occurring costs, such as transport for teacher monitoring and follow up visits. In this context, it needs to be mentioned that the designed SEE project did not envisage larger support for building up a local CBO.

ADRA Myanmar does not have a particular anti-corruption policy in place. The issue however, has been addressed and integrated in the existing finance and procurement policies to be followed. These policies have proved to be sufficient and effective tools against fraud. Due to information provided by ADRA's finance unit, the partners were generally able to deliver necessary quality finance support documents. Nevertheless, discussions also revealed that partners need to learn more about ADRA's financial accountability standards and what is required to fulfill certain standards and criteria.

### **Efficiency of planning and implementation**

How well were means/inputs planned and activities converted into outputs.

The key features of the SEE project have been efficiently implemented by ADRA with skilled and motivated staff able to implement the project that was characterized by school repair and refurbishment, teacher training and provision of student kits as activities with the highest investments.



While there were a few challenges coming along the way, one was encountered in the start-off phase with the lack of approved access to target communities, finally resulting in a “drive-through” approach during the last quarter of 2013. When the permission to enter the target area was finally granted by end of September, the project team started the assessment of the government schools in close collaboration with government staff. As the GoM ensured their role and interests throughout discussion about project implementation, ADRA was not able to withstand the request for building two new schools instead of refurbishment, as formerly planned. Through reasons like time restriction and the likelihood of the government’s involvement hindered the project team to capture community voices through participatory approaches. Thus, there was simply not enough time given to exercise a comprehensive community-inclusive approach during this specific period of time. This fact has left best-practice participation behind the ideal participatory community development as usually strived for.

Nevertheless, accordingly to available report data, the project managed to implement the activities in cost-efficient ways. For instance, student kits (*Bag, umbrella, pencil case with items, 12 notebooks, and 1 set school uniform*) were purchased at lower costs than initially anticipated. Despite the government inquiry for two new school buildings with a significant higher financial input than planned, the project team was still able to repair and refurbish village schools as planned. The evaluation revealed that community contributions in kind as well as in cash (payments for external laborer) helped to cover the gap that occurred from the government request.

### **Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation System**

Some inconsistency between the project proposal and the project LF regarding definitions used for “Objectives”, “Outputs” and “Results” has been identified. There seems to be some misunderstanding over the definition of results and output.<sup>18</sup> The LF, for instance, sets the outputs on the result level.

A second version of the LF exists which is a brief summary document only. It was developed as a revised version (brief summary) within the first few months. Its purpose was to include a new activity and indicator “*Teachers’ Stipends*”.<sup>19</sup> The official and disseminated LF, however, was not updated. According to the project management, the new activity was approved by ADRA Norway.

The objective 1 “*Children in Southeastern Myanmar enjoy quality basic education*”, is posed quite broad and merely future oriented. As it is unlikely that this objective can be reached within the confines of the given time, as indicated in SEE project log frame, the results 2 and 3 of component 1 are not directly linked to the level of objective 1. The expected results of objective 1 are:

Result 2: “Teachers and students are adequately equipped with teaching and learning materials”

Result 3: “Teachers have acquired improved teaching skills through in-service teacher training course”

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<sup>18</sup>ADRA Myanmar SEE Project Proposal, 11.

<sup>19</sup>The wording in the brief LF summary file “*Teachers Stipends*” refers to ACS teachers only.

Regarding the two OVIs for the result 2 “110 teachers provided with a teacher kit containing bag, uniform, stationary etc.” and “3.225 students provided with a pupil kit containing school bag, uniform, stationary etc.” were met. The project reports and M&E data prove that teachers and students received the items listed. However, in terms of efficiency it remains doubtful whether the Result 2 was fulfilled. In this context and as already mentioned earlier, the discussion about the meaning of the phrase “adequately equipped” and how the beneficiaries would define it remains. However, the project components’ OVIs technically fulfill the required standard and are “Specific”, “Measurable”, “Attainable”, “Realistic” and “Timely” (SMART).

ADRA and its partners have maintained different M&E systems that serve the unique structures and project tracking requirements of the organizations respectively. It has been noted that ADRA’s project team has not strived for alignment of the relevant M&E elements from the partners into one project M&E system. As a result, ADRA did not have an efficient M&E system in place that would provide sufficient data from all projects components. Each CBO, however, maintains a well-managed database with most necessary information readily retrievable.

### **Staffing, management and cooperation with the counterpart organizations**

The ADRA Hpa-an project team (10 staff members) started to work together under challenging conditions. During the initial months, the team partly worked ‘below radar’ and without government approval for their community visits. The environment of daily tension increased the pressure on the local project management and the staff alike, as it has been expressed by a few interviewees with the words “I felt high pressure” and “we had to go there” – talking about the areas where the government did not provide permission until May 2013. The lessons learned in this aspect have already been identified and reported in the project end report. Project staff alerted to the necessity to initiate the discussion about the requirement of the permission letter early, prior to the time when access to respective areas is needed. Project staff further suggested that this procedure should be followed by regular permission re-confirmations, given by the government offices. It has been reported that government officials themselves encouraged ADRA staff to follow-up on the requested documents on a weekly basis in order to avoid the potential loss of documents.

The co-operations with project partners are a key feature of the project design. In this context, official agreement (MoU) was only achieved with KTWG while ACS did not operate within a MoU framework agreement. In this aspect, feedbacks from interview partners indicate the desire and need for an official frame in order to enable the organizational cooperation towards higher efficiency. In addition, the need for better networking strategies was identified by the fact that *Save the Children* started operating (school repair) in a village that initially was identified by ADRA. With the realization of the overlap in operation, ADRA team decided to select another village for project implementation. A few interviewees indicated the need for a better coordination between NGOs at the operational level (Hpa-An) in order to avoid overlapping with a consequent decrease in efficiency.

The range of activities carried out by the partners was within their scope of capacity. The partners are experienced to operate with alternating input from various sources. The activities conducted focused on improving teachers’ teaching capacity through regular training units.

The ToT sessions were regularly challenged by limited resources (insufficient food supply) and logistic difficulties (transport of teachers to the training site and place of accommodation). Both partner CBOs (ACS and KTWG) carried out a one-month-intensive summer break training. For ACS, all 49 teachers from ACS supported schools attended the training. While ACS supports only 12 schools, KTWG reaches out to seven districts in Karen State. In this area, KTWG works with more than 2,400 teachers from more than 700 schools to improve their competence and teaching quality. The number of teachers who were finally able to attend was linked to the ToT training site and the number of MTTs to run the training sessions. Further, as communities are supporting their teachers, they were also required to cover teachers' travel costs. Throughout the evaluation, there was the growing impression that this might be an additional limiting factor for full attendance of all available teachers.

From the documents reviewed, the SEE NORAD project overall fully met or exceeded project targets within the allocated budget and time frame. The scope and extent of the work done by the project team is outstanding. For four result areas as determined in the Log frame, all of the 7 defined indicators have been met. Additionally, there was large unity among interview partners and focus group participants for the overall relevance of the project and the conviction that the project has contributed to promoting peace and integration among various ethnic groups.

## Impact

The project's anticipated contribution to the overall Development Goal
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Although project impact can generally be expected within a longer period of time, impact of the project in empirical terms can be determined, owing to the existence of credible baseline data and routinely captured M&E information. The Baseline Survey ascertains the correlation between the desire among ethnic nationalities for self-determination and the establishment of distinct ethnic education systems.<sup>20</sup> In this context, the project was able to reach its target OVis to strengthen and enhance dialog platforms for ethnic education leaders as well as for ethnic education leaders and other stakeholders. In fact, the evaluator felt that there was an atmosphere of openness and willingness for social interaction and dialog across various ethnic backgrounds. According to participants the quality of discussion and dialog did not reveal any indication for reservations about the potential development of a Framework of Cooperation between ethnic education leaders. This atmosphere of hope and trust in a future, characterized by a "thickening of linkages between the non-state and state systems"<sup>21</sup> can also be evaluated as impact from the project's partner contributions.

Child education in non-government controlled areas and mixed-controlled areas is characterized by fewer opportunities for enrolment and completion of the primary cycle.

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<sup>20</sup>Tim Schroeder, *Baseline Report*, 5.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, 21.

However, the number of listed and assisted schools by KSEAG has steadily increased over the past years, including a significant increase in student enrolment (17 %) in the school year 2012 – 2013.<sup>22</sup> As already formerly mentioned, the project evaluation was able to identify an increase of student enrolment of 13 % (school year 2013-2014) throughout its target area. These current student enrolment figures slightly indicate that the project made an impact on the overall education situation. In order to evaluate the teachers' educational background, the evaluator hoped to find access to respective data from KTWG data base. However, reliable information about the educational background of the teachers was not existent. It is assumed that many teachers are not formally trained as already indicated in the Baseline Survey. At the primary levels, many teachers did not finish high school or even middle school.

The facilitation of teacher training sessions was one key component of the project, carried out by ADRA's two partner CBOs, ACS and KTWG. Due to restricted access to the project areas, ADRA could not be present on respective training sites in order to monitor KTWG and ACS in training. However, during discussions and conversations with KTWG, the evaluator was impressed by the level of experience and motivation, observed among staff and teacher trainers of the CBO. Equipped with professional capacity, teacher trainers organized and conducted valuable ToT sessions in an independent fashion. This description reflects the overall impression the evaluator was able to draw from a meeting with three coordinating staff members and the training manual review.

Additional information and feedbacks from trainees (community teachers) was not available. Despite the fact that ACS had developed a feedback sheet with a few good questions, that intended to capture training participants' opinions, was finally not included into the M&E system and therewith, the results were not available for further evaluations and/or reviews.

While the teacher trainings given by ACS were conducted in a more transparent manner, equipped with a similar training curriculum to that of KTWG, critical responses of ToT recipients evaluated teacher trainings with ACS in a less positive light than the teacher training quality of KTWG has generally been perceived. This criticism can be summarized as follows: The training was overly organized as didactic teaching (chalk and talk), thus "boring". Interviewed teachers lamented the fact that dialog, group work and interaction was missing. Furthermore, they wished to see timely training follow-ups planned, regular monitoring as well as the trainers' school site visits for training-on-the-job units.

Positive as well as negative feedback will contribute to further lessons learned. In general it can be noted that teacher trainings were perceived as stimulating impact on existing teaching performance of ethnic education actors.

Further impact was identified through the stakeholder meetings at various levels as desired to be seen on the result level 2. These forums created space for dialog between education stakeholders from the government and ethnic education leaders who discussed issues regarding the *Comprehensive Education Sector Review* (CESR) approach. CBO participants and ethnic education leaders highly appreciated these communication lines as very valuable and expressed their hope that this communication process will be continued. One respondent said: "We could *feel* that our issues were heard."

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 8.

This reflecting comment indicates the positive direction of this dialogue. The KSED director who valued ADRA's role in facilitation gave a similar response. The evaluator posed the question: "The project also has a component to support the dialogue between EAGs. Do you think this is a beneficial way forward to help reduce potential conflict?" The KSED director responded that it is helpful for the process of peace building. He further explains that the last meeting was hopeful because conflict issues were openly discussed straight from the ground level and have a direct impact on the relationship with the GoM and KNU. As a case in point, he enthusiastically illustrated the new opportunity for student refugees in the camps to sit their exam in Myanmar and to receive official school documents from the GoM while they completed their actual school education in a camp school. 50 students were officially accepted to do so in 2013. In the year 2014, however, 150 school leavers from camp schools received their school certificates from the GoM. The director closed his response with the hope that, within Karen areas, all armed forces will be informed and included in this pioneering new development. Last but not least, it can be humbly said that the impact of the dialog platform for ethnic community leaders, NGOs and GoM authorities contributed to this new development.

### **Potential Sustainability**

The likelihood of a continuation in the stream of benefits produced by the project(s) after the period of external support has ended.

There is large agreement that the development process in the hands of the communities increases ownership and sustainability. Sustainable solutions in this context seem only reachable with community involvement in decision-making processes. The review of project documents, observations and discussions with project team members and other stakeholders, including villagers and children, provide a glimpse into the situation and allow some comments regarding the potential sustainability.

When the SEE NORAD project was launched in early 2013, the relationship between ADRA and government offices was underdeveloped. It was a strategic decision when ADRA placed a Liaison officer at the Hpa-An office who started to build trustful and effective relationships with government officials from various offices. In this context, the project team did well to facilitate this relationship building and as the result after one year, the ground work was done.

During the interview with government officials, there was the impression that they feel challenged by the tension between the personal relationships built with ADRA staff and their duties as government officials. On the official level they expressed of being only able to support within the frame of strict guidelines of government rules and regulations. On the personal level, however, there is the willingness to support ADRA staff and future activities with additional helpful advices.

The interviews and focus group discussions provide consistent information that villagers are highly interested in their children's education. There is a general strong sense for the importance of education

for future progress and development, which is also underlined by students' efforts to migrate to Thailand into refugee camps for educational purposes.

The project's initiative of facilitating a dialogue platform between the GoM and ethnic education leaders may finally lead to improved education services in Southeastern Myanmar over the next couple of years. The rising student enrolment figures, as mentioned earlier, indicate a trend towards improved education services and sustainability.

Supporting community-based organizations is a crucial and important part towards sustainability. The rationale behind is that INGOs are only temporarily operating in the target areas with hired staff. For CBOs, however, accepted community members and those locally adopted are engaged in the work and operate within locally accepted decision-making structures. The sustainability approach would seek ways to not only provide funding for activities but also include financial means for improving human resources and management capacity. Through the SEE NORAD project support, ACS and KTWG received funds for conducting teacher training sessions (provision of food, shelter, transport and some materials). This support was not designed to directly build up organizational capacity but to ensure that ToT is delivered.

One key aspect that works towards sustainability is the approach for development interventions. Community feedbacks indicate that villagers who tackled their problems during times of armed conflicts wish to be included in decision processes. During the evaluation study in the village several individuals responded ***"We would appreciate when our voices would be included and community advice would contribute to the decision process."*** Regarding community involvement, there is a strong need for a strategic use of an inclusive approach in the next project phase. This consequently leads to the need to train project staff in participatory approaches to ensure decisions are made in cooperation with villagers. A too quick pragmatic push towards a decision bears the risk that the program falls behind the desired community acceptance. Additionally, future interventions are more likely to face community resistances. A decent indication to community ownership and herewith sustainability can be seen in communities with functioning School Management Committees (SMC) or Parents-Teachers Associations (PTA). The evaluator received the report that in several communities SMCs are functioning quite well while initial discussions to form PTAs have started.

## **Cross-cutting issues**

In project design and implementation, cross-cutting issues are gaining in importance and focus. The TOR provides a list of issues whereas the findings from the evaluation study contribute to the discussion but also lead to further conclusions. The following insights were captured from interviews, available documents and visual research (drawings).

The gender ratio in the project team of men and women was 8:2, including one male expat with a coordination role. Male trainers also dominated the conduction of ToT by ACS. The Baseline Report published statistics from KSEAG data base, indicating that 77% of a total of 5.579 teachers are female.<sup>23</sup> This fact, however, has not sufficiently informed ADRA's community development or ToT conduction

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<sup>23</sup>Tim Schroeder, *Baseline Report*, 18.

approach so far. In evaluation interviews, one female teacher pointed to the need for more female teacher trainers as well as for support in project follow ups and monitoring activities.

In other words, if ADRA will begin to deliberately invest in female Karen Teachers through their teacher training component, the organization would have a strong gender component, improve the quality of basic education and will also support the education reform process by the possible integration of teachers into a national and ethnic sensitive education system in the future.<sup>24</sup>

The project proposal suggests that there is a need for local operating CBOs to build own organizational capacity. During one of the interviews with a CBO, the point was made that they perceive a considerable limitation to their current role as a local development actor. They generally valued ADRA's overall approach to support and provide funds for certain activities. However, they lamented that the organization does not provide necessary means for the CBO to build and maintain organizational structures that would allow them to act more independently.

In the final project report, ACS reports about challenges that occurred in preparation for and during the ToT session. The challenges were transportation of teachers, food preparation and accommodation. However, it needs to be noted that ADRA was restricted from accessing the project sites in order to assist ACS. This evaluation study acknowledges the project management's perseverance to overcome potential obstacles with area access. Thus, the project management team learned a valuable lesson about the importance to cooperate well with authorities and government offices but also to closely follow up with government offices to obtain necessary permission letters.

Under the section 'recommendations', the evaluation team further explains its rationale for the concept of strengthening local CBO partners by monthly funds, so that the organization is enabled to operate relatively independently.

Due to the circumstances of this short pilot project, the environment issue did not receive a significant focus. There was also no information available that the school building or renovation concepts would include the issue, e.g. placing rubbish bins in schools and train children practicing the separation of wet and dry waste. A more comprehensive review and suggestions would be valuable to include in the next project design, midterm- and end evaluation.

During the focus group discussions, teachers were able to respond positively to the issue of a child-centered teaching approach. The CBOs ACS and KTWG already incorporated this term into their ToT sessions and teachers seem to implement its practical application in their schools. Before this background, it is sensible that the first objective of the project emphasizes that "children in Southeastern Myanmar enjoy quality basic education." In this context, the evaluator was interested to gain further insights from the children's perspectives and how they themselves experience childhood and school in their respective environment. During one of the focus group meetings, the evaluator invited 49 children to draw the activities of their daily lives, including their activities in the school. In conclusion, it can be said that almost all of the drawings depicted the homogenous integration of nature, wildlife and a house/shelter for the family. While the family residence was a lively part of daily activity, the school building appeared in stark

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 21.

contrast to all the rest. The pictures revealed a separation between school and work and school and family.

The Baseline Report indicates that the % of school-going children in Karen State decreases significantly over the years. This high drop-out rate across Southeastern Myanmar seems to be primarily related to the long standing ethnic conflict in Myanmar and its serious negative impact on the education systems. However, this evaluation study likes to encourage further qualitative study with children from a global perspective, so that qualitative data about children's perspectives on root causes about early school drop-out may become complementary to quantitative research findings.

It should be noted that the separation between school and work, as depicted in the children's drawings, is an invention of modern childhood in the West. But in the non-western context of childhood, leaving work to attend school for most children in most of the world involves leaving family-based employment or the family home to attend a poorly resourced school with barely qualified teachers where the teaching methods largely rely on rote-learning.<sup>25</sup> However, in the context of the project's evaluation, parents' positive reports about their children's joyful school attendance in a newly refurbished school building with strengthened teachers' capacity to welcome children with a child-centered teaching approach is a true reason for hope.

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<sup>25</sup>Karen Wells, *Childhood in a Global Perspective*, 94.



## **Chapter 3: Project Partnerships**

### ***Adventist Community Service (ACS)***

With the foundation of the SDA church, an appropriate response to community needs has been part of its mission. In order to better organize and effectively respond to crisis and disaster, the church supported the foundation of a professional organization in 1956 (ADRA) but also the foundation for locally established community development structures, represented by ACS today. In the beginnings, ACS has developed locally effective structures, fulfilling the purpose to involve laity for reaching out and to respond to community needs in following key areas:

- Disaster response
- Community development
- Youth Empowered to Service (YES program)
- Tutoring & Mentoring
- Elderly care
- Crisis care

In Myanmar, ACS has requested legal status since 2010. The request is still pending. So far, ACS operates as a Church led entity with own organizational structures. In times of need, especially in crisis situations like conflict or natural disaster, local church members get involved in livelihood activities, environmental protection, community health care and educational support actions. The motivation for engagement in these activities is rooted in the calling for “Serving communities in Christ’s love.”

The first more significant collaboration between ADRA and ACS was established when Nargis Cyclone hit Myanmar. Since then, several other joint responses were carried out through ACS; in areas where ADRA only had limited access to reach the communities in need. The fact that the SDA church maintains a widespread network of churches in all parts of the country, the collaboration between these both entities (ADRA and ACS) has the potential to become very effective and efficient in the response to community needs.

The collaboration between ADRA and ACS established in the SEE NORAD pilot project aimed to reach out to conflict-affected communities in SE Myanmar, Karen and Mon state. Supporting the basic education system in those areas, ACS played a significant role in organizing and conducting yearly teacher training camps for teachers from supported schools. The collaboration between ADRA and ACS was also extended in order to provide support for necessary school repair (7 schools) as well as providing funds for covering teachers’ stipends throughout the pilot period of the project. Despite the fact that the selected schools were successfully repaired, the collaboration faced a few challenges. The key challenge rooted in the fact that ACS did not receive support for improving its own structures or hiring own staff. This fact made it more difficult for ACS to further operate and develop as CBO in order to play an efficient role in future partnerships. For the next SEE NORAD project phase therefore, it seems to be reasonable and necessary to allocate funds to ACS that help them building up their potential as local operating CBO (please also see recommendation 2).

Another conclusion is related to SEE NORAD pilot project' design to cover ACS teachers' stipend for the project period. However, the project's final report does not cover detailed information about this activity. This indicates the need for a better streamlining of partners' information into the existing donor report format. But what is even more significant is the question whether ADRA is able and also willing to provide full coverage of the stipends for school teachers at ACS- supported schools, as initially started in 2013. In this context, it appears to be necessary that ADRA clearly outlines the rationale behind the intended project implementation strategy in discussion with ACS in the near future.

### **Karen Teacher Working Group (KTWG)**

In response to the needs of Karen teachers working in refugee camps along the Thai-Myanmar border and in the Karen-controlled areas of Karen State, the Karen Teacher Working Group (KTWG) was organized in 1997. KTWG understands itself as a local Karen non-governmental organization (NGO) without being affiliated to any parent organization. The structure reflects the commitment for an ongoing increase of community participation in and ownership for all areas of education support. At this point, however, it needs to be mentioned and clarified that KTWG is a non-registered CBO, nurtured by foreign aid and technical input. Since its beginning, the organization has been supported by various international donor organizations and private funds. KTWG in its core activity provides teacher training and its respective follow-up for community school teachers in conflict-affected areas, with the exception of the areas where ACS operates. KTWG provides culturally-based and situational relevant training units to ensure that local needs find local solutions. The main goal of KTWG is to equip teachers with skills that enable them to respond to the ever-changing needs of the youth and the people. We advocate active student-centered classrooms to encourage problem solving, creativity and critical thinking. These are the skills identified as important and essential for enabling the Karen ethnic group to build present and future perspectives, despite almost 60 years of armed conflict.

The collaboration between ADRA and KTWG was formalized through a MoU. The activities conducted were aligned with the guidelines as set out in the proposal and LF. ADRA provided funding for the conduction of teacher training sessions (ToTs), given on 92 sites for 2404 teachers within the time frame of three months (June to October 2013).

While the proposal aimed to provide ToTs for 25% of all teachers, KTWG was finally able to train 40% of the total number of teachers. The training curriculum is developed as a teacher's manual (*"In the Hand of Teachers"*), which is well structured with 26 training subjects that are delivered over a two-year period. The ToT-sessions held on 92 sites for approximately three weeks respectively are offered for in-service teachers and delivered by MTTs. The teacher training program was delivered through Mobile Teacher Trainers (MTTs) who quarterly visit community school teachers once every quarter. While the teachers receive a relatively well structured input through KTWG, schools are poorly equipped with teaching aids. However, the MTTs promote using natural and locally available materials such as sticks, leaves, mud, etc. for the lessons. Occasionally, KTWG is able to provide certain school supplies but are largely depending on available funds.

KTWG maintains a comprehensive database with available and detailed information about schools, teachers and students. However, data about the teachers' educational background or children with disabilities in the community are not captured in this database. In addition, KTWG occasionally encourages PTA meetings without emphasizing formal structure with regular PTA implementation. It has been reported that communities identify with their village school and mostly support the teachers as best as they can. But there are also cases where teachers complain about the low support from parents' sides. In general, it would be recommendable to include existing PTA activities in the M&E system.

With regard to the language of instruction it is interesting to note that KTWG indicated that more than 70% of the teachers would be capable to conduct teaching lessons in Burmese language. This testifies that most teachers on site have learned the Burmese language at least to some degree. This finding may support the notion that a future strategy of the GoM could lie in the concept to recognize community teachers as equivalent to government-trained teachers. While the discussions between the GoM and ethnic minorities over a standardized curriculum will continue, the future project may nurture the idea that the GoM and ethnic group representatives may find a good way forward by modifying existing curricula in line with an ASEAN standard. The key question, however, will remain the same, asking to which degree ethnic identity can be reflected in a government-recognized curriculum.

## **ADRA Network cooperation**

The strength of ADRA lies in its network cooperation potential. The development of a project proposal is usually a joint venture activity between two ADRA offices depending on capacity and time for preparation. In this context it is very valuable when capacity and input is offered by the ADRA support office not only for the project preparation phase but throughout the project lifetime. As ADRA Norway made this offer, the project end evaluation is required to include this aspect in the evaluation process as mentioned in the TOR.

The project proposal outlines the role of ADRA Norway in details and mentions two essential aspects for capacity building which is to

- provide technical support to the local partners, drawing on the expertise built throughout many years of experience with education programs in various countries ... some of which in similar post-conflict settings,
- facilitate the sharing of best practices and lessons learned ... from other education partners globally.<sup>26</sup>

Available data including the final project report and responses obtained through interviews do not provide information about given inputs as intended above. The evaluation study and interviews with a number of individuals provide evidence for capacity building needs by project staff at various levels.

One significant aspect is to internalize principles for implementing the project in conflict sensitive areas including Do-no-harm aspects. Practical lessons learned would definitely help the project team to

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<sup>26</sup>ADRA Myanmar, *Support for Education in Post-Conflict Southeastern Myanmar*, Project Proposal, 13.

understand the issue and complexity in comprehensive ways. Quarterly project progress reports are usually designed at the ADRA field level with support from the head office. The report template however is designed at the ADRA support office, which is the direct liaison with the donor. Feedbacks from the field level suggest the development of a simplified template that captures all indicators, including those primarily linked to the partner organizations. Another aspect where ADRA Myanmar may consider support from the network is for the M&E system set-up.

## Chapter 4: Government & EAG relations

The quality of the relationship between ADRA and the GoM represented through its regional departments is an important issue and therefore worthwhile to be discussed in this section. During the SEE NORAD pilot project period, the project team had learned some significant lessons, which are partially reflected in the project's end report. At this point it seems reasonable to extract few overall lessons learned and interweave key findings with capacity building efforts (see recom. # 3). The data available from the final project report and the interviews suggest taking a closer look at two interlinked key areas for further consideration:

**ADRA's strategy to obtain permission to access project areas:** The GoM granted permission to start with the project in April 2013. Permission to conduct the school repair however, was not obtained before the end of September 2013, three month prior to the planned project completion. This remaining short amount of time caused tremendous pressure for the project team. However, they were able to carry out school repair- and refurbishment tasks, including all essential logistics, for 16 existing and 2 new schools within the limited time frame while they built essential relationships with government offices. Meanwhile, the government pushed ahead that mostly schools in government controlled areas were primarily considered for refurbishment. The government's agenda also included the erection of two new school buildings. For the new project phase it is suggested to transparently outline all planned activities and areas of intervention to government officials. ADRA needs to be aware of the GoM's ongoing attempt to direct ADRA's operations primarily into government-controlled areas. In order to develop and sustain a firm and balanced approach, ADRA is suggested to start an internal discussion with ACS over the issue of a common agreement for a way forward. In this context, concerns and thoughts of individual staff members and partners should be openly discussed.

**Strategy to ensure ADRA's operational integrity:** In times of governmental pressure on the NGO operational level it is vitally important to deal with the issue in appropriate manners and consider ways that help to ensure NGO's integrity is kept and commitment for the least developed communities, including those in non-government controlled zones is ensured. For ADRA's staff it may seem opportune at times to operate "below radar" but this does not facilitate good relationships and mutual trust with government offices. When the project team becomes fully aware of certain political issues involved, it is suggested to report difficulties immediately to the ADRA head office. Thus, ADRA leadership may consider reporting significant obstacles on the way of project implementation to the donor. NORAD is well acquainted with the Norwegian government, which is politically engaged in the peace process in Myanmar. On the practical level it also seems to be necessary that ADRA outlines the need for monitoring activities in areas controlled by armed non-state actors and identifies ways to obtain travel permission. It is vitally important to build awareness for the need of regular monitoring at various levels, so that the government may acknowledge that regular monitoring will be a necessity, even in areas outside of their direct control.

ADRA's relationship with the KNU and its respective departments has been well maintained over the last few years. According management information ADRA has maintained good relations with the entity including through unofficial meetings and partially cross-border relationships.

For the official meetings that took place (Component 2) on both sides of the border, ADRA management and leadership was present as well as project management staff. The field staff was due to oral reports not involved nor briefed after the meetings.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

### *Overall Findings and Conclusion*

SEE-NORAD-Pilot-Project of ten months duration has been overall well received by the communities it served. The findings of the project evaluation reveal solid evidence that strengths of the SEE-NORAD project were directly linked to staff relationships with key stakeholders and partners (e.g. KSED, Nataka office, ACS, KTWG, KED) and the credibility of ADRA's networks, structures and systems.

The project is highly relevant, reasonably effective and efficient. Initial impact as far as it can be expected within the pilot period is being monitored and steps have been taken to enhance aspects of sustainability. Areas for growth and improvements can be identified in the following four areas:

- Project management and communication lines
- Approaches to community mobilization
- Partner relations
- Internal capacity building strategies.

Comments to these areas are made in respective sections of the report but finalized in the recommendations. Overall however, the targets of the LF have been met according to interpretation. Within the given timeframe for implementing the components, the project team was able to build the necessary relationships with government authorities, local communities and teachers. The two project components of rebuilding and refurbishing schools and to facilitate a dialogue platform between education stakeholders contributed to an increased trust level. This may help pave the way for the next project phase and the future project team to utilize and build on these relationships.

### *Recommendations*

#### **Recommendation 1**

**Government and EAG relationships:** (a) Continue to build relationships of mutual trust with government offices and departments as well as their KNU counterparts. In doing so, it is advisable to invite all relevant government and KNU officials for a project-related inception workshop. Staff of the Norwegian Embassy from Yangon could also be invited to participate. Government and KNU officers will feel appreciated and well informed when they receive a project summary document in local language (Myanmar- Karen). The provided paper may include core objectives and information about target areas and partnerships to ensure a good level of transparency. It is also suggested that ADRA invites government and KNU officers to participate in capacity building sessions and project team meetings to create regular opportunities to update GoM and KNU with project relevant information.

(b) Despite the need for strategic inclusiveness with government's organizational structures, the evaluators are well aware of ADRA's challenge and necessity to keep up its independent organizational profile. Therefore, the evaluation team suggests to clearly and transparently outlining ADRA's project strategy for the selection of intervention areas, so that a good balance between government-controlled and community schools, which are often aligned with KNU/KED, can be identified. This suggested action

plan would help to prevent further conflict and protect ADRA's integrity and reputation against any potential accusation to merely support schools in government-controlled areas.

## **Recommendation 2**

**Partner relationships :**(a) Enhance inter-organizational communication lines, in particular with the CBO ACS. In this context, it is suggested that ADRA composes a MoU with the partner CBO. This MoU entails responsibilities in respective management lines, including reporting lines and communication structures and clear guidelines for staffing issues, outlined with transparency to all employees.

(b) It is further suggested that ADRA identifies appropriate financial support to empower ACS to fulfill its partner role in future collaborations as needed. The evaluation team identified the unique chance at hand to strengthen and equip this local CBO to become a well-resourced partner within the next project life-cycle and beyond. Taking development theory into account, econAN likes to encourage ADRA Myanmar to actively support the building of local and community-based organizations, which are an integral part of civil society in Myanmar. When local organizations are strengthened, an important step is accomplished toward community mobilization, ownership and consequent sustainability.

## **Recommendation 3**

**Capacity building:**(a) *Best-practice community development approaches* are not yet well internalized among project staff. Therefore, it is suggested to tailor a suitable capacity building program with learning units about "Community Development Principles and Practices." EconAN identified the vital importance for ADRA to interact and engage with communities (e.g. trust building for community mobilization) on a larger scale and to learn more about the full spectrum of livelihood issues and community-based participation in need analysis as well as in communal development action. Therefore, it is critical to build a good understanding among staff about best-practice community development approaches in order to empower communities to become active stakeholders and contributors toward holistic development.

(b) Conflict sensitivity and "Do No Harm" approach. Prior to the start-off into the next project phase, ADRA is advised to train and sensitize staff about principles and approaches necessary to know and apply in conflict sensitive areas. This will become especially necessary with further growth of the team and its presence in conflict-sensitive areas. A timely induction for all staff could cover these issues. For the sake of quality it is suggested to identify external expertise.

(c) Project management and leadership training (mentoring). For the beginning of a new project phase, the evaluation team likes to encourage the project management and leadership to utilize best-practice team building and communication approaches. For the up-coming five year project cycle, it is important that the project management continuously builds on a trustful working environment that encourages all team members to communicate effectively and provide mutual feedback. To cultivate such positive organizational culture, it is suggested to schedule mentoring sessions for the PM on a regular basis, ideally bi-monthly or at least for the first two years of the project. This will set a secure frame for growth and development of the prospective project manager, so that he or she is equipped to internalize the dimensions and dynamics of leadership and teambuilding.

(d) Despite all good work of the project team and its efforts toward positive relations with GoM and KNU, ADRA's relations with both are still in its tender initial stage. Therefore, econAN recommends a systemized



experience exchange (e.g. meetings, reports) between project staff and the central office, in order to support a unified understanding of how to deal with GoM and KNU officials and their structures. Latest information from the Liaison officer could be built into regular communication lines.

#### **Recommendation 4**

**Material delivery:** To obtain permission in a timely manner for delivering materials has obviously been a challenge during the pilot project period. In order to better streamline and transparently communicate the necessary steps, we recommend developing a chart that visualizes the different necessary steps of the process. This will also help new staff to clearly understand required action steps within a certain period.

#### **Recommendation 5**

**TOT sessions:** The conduction of teacher training sessions was a key component of the project. In this context it is suggested that ADRA encourages both entities, ACS and KTWG to share training materials. It was found that KTWG did develop a quite comprehensive Trainer's Manual called "In the Hands of Teachers" that outlines a two year comprehensive training program. Having said this, ADRA may consider initiating a discussion for including the two missing training topics, inclusiveness and environmental issues. For the next project phase it is also suggested to offer the learning sessions also to government teachers from neighboring schools. It was found that teachers from ACS and KTWG schools also know few government teachers who are teaching in schools in mixed or government controlled areas. ADRA could play a facilitator role and initiate a dialogue platform at the teacher level. This may help enhance trust relationships among government staff and community teachers. For inviting and including government teachers in TOT sessions however, it should be noted that the KSED requests to become pre-informed about the TOT program and its respective training content.

#### **Recommendation 6**

**Gender sensitivity and balance :**(a) Ensure that female teacher trainers are recruited or play a vital role within the team of teacher trainers. This step will help to better identify issues concerning young (mostly single) women while working in communities. (b) Community mobilization activities should be seen as important steps to reach out to both, male and female villagers in order to capture their voices. In this context, the evaluation team considers the advantage in hiring female community mobilizer who could work side by side with their male colleagues. The rationale behind is that ADRA's goal of inclusiveness can be better reached when the organizational level underlines this approach by modeling this principle. And as a side effect, ADRA's partners will be encouraged to actively consider working toward a good standard for gender balance.

#### **Recommendation 7**

**Community contributions:** Never push toward a quick agreement on community contributions but follow best-practice procedures and fully ensure transparency as well as the option of free choice for villagers. By keeping in mind the short duration of this pilot project, it seems too early to expect community consensus. In order to avoid jeopardizing tender trust relationships with communities, ADRA is advised to restrain from any cash or in-kind contribution requests. We further suggest that ADRA internally streamlines a policy for community contributions, prior to any further intervention. A clear guideline and procedure in place will help staff to be better prepared for respective discussions in the communities. This finally will reduce community tensions and concerns regarding the issue. To avoid irritation and confusion,

ADRA may wish to make sure that government officials are not present during community discussions about the issue of contributions.

### **Recommendation 8**

**Work plan development:** For the next project phase, it is suggested that the PMT develops a detailed work plan together with key field staff and the partners. The work plan clearly outlines what kind of work/activity is to be done in the respective week or month. This approach will help to reduce uncertainty among the project team as well as streamline the implementation process with the partner CBOs.

### **Recommendation 9**

**Monitoring and evaluation system:** The project evaluation system has the potential for improvements. It is suggested Improve the project evaluation system by including data from partners, such as detailed data from ACS about school repair and refurbishing, information about numbers of teachers, students, village households, SMC and PTA status, completed ToTs as well as data about teachers' educational background. In this context it would be valuable to also work out effective means to capture qualitative data and use the existing means for integrating them into the project M&E system. econAN likes to emphasize the vital importance that all team members internalize the necessity to regularly collect and capture data, including updating their personal existing data files after their return from field trips.

### **Recommendation 10**

**Project management:** Maintain weekly meetings in order to streamline weekly activities, to clarify potential questions and to motivate and encourage the team. Those who are in leading functions are encouraged to facilitate teambuilding by actively promoting invite team members' participation in discussions. Top-down approaches in this context are more likely to create fear and resistances. This needs strictly to be avoided. Especially for management roles, mentorship may provide the understanding needed to fill management roles in sufficient terms.

### **Recommendation 11**

#### **Future school constructions/renovations:**

(a) Determine the area of intervention (village schools) in a timely manner and through a participatory approach, including all stakeholders.

(b) Include sanitary facilities and safe access to water in all future school constructions/renovations in order to contribute to a safe, healthy and child-friendly school environment.

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## Annexes

Annex 1: List of Interview partners and focus group settings

Annex 2: List of available documents

Annex 3: Terms of References (TOR)

Annex 4: Guiding questions for interviews

Annex 5: Focus group discussion and assignments

Annex 6: FGD participants – Attendance list

Annex 7: Children Drawings

Annex 8: Picture gallery

## Annex 1: Interview Partners

Name	Position	Institution	Contact
Brendon Irvine	Country Director	ADRA MM	<a href="mailto:brendon.irvine.adra.myanmar@gmail.com">brendon.irvine.adra.myanmar@gmail.com</a>
Oliver Kyaw Aung	Programs Director	ADRA MM	<a href="mailto:adra.myanmar.programs@gmail.com">adra.myanmar.programs@gmail.com</a>
George Opundo	Finance Director	ADRA MM	<a href="mailto:george.opundo@adra-myanmar.org">george.opundo@adra-myanmar.org</a>
Daniel Owor Onyanya	Program Coordinator	ADRA MM	<a href="mailto:daniel.onyanya.adramyanmar@gmail.com">daniel.onyanya.adramyanmar@gmail.com</a>
Saw Eh Moo	Project Manager	ADRA MM	<a href="mailto:sawchit32@gmail.com">sawchit32@gmail.com</a>
Saw Loving	Renovation Mobilizer	ADRA MM	
Saw Shwe Kyaw	Education Coordinator	ADRA MM / ACS	
Saw Htoo Wah	Education Mobilizer	ADRA MM (formerly)	
Pr. Khim Mg Yia	President	SEM	<a href="mailto:Jessejames179@gmail.com">Jessejames179@gmail.com</a>
Saw CallyThein	Treasurer	SEM	<a href="mailto:callytheinnay@gmail.com">callytheinnay@gmail.com</a>
Pr. Morris Chit	Mission Secretary and ACS Coordinator	SEM	<a href="mailto:morrischit@gmail.com">morrishit@gmail.com</a>
U Tun KoKo	Administrator	Hpa-An Township	
U Saw Aung Naing Thein	Administrator	Border Affairs and Security Office (Natala)	
U San Ngwe	Director	Karen State Education Department	
MaungMaung Myo Chan	Director	SDA Mission, Department of Communication & Public Affairs	
Mr. Scott O'Brien	Coordinator	Karen Teacher Working Group (KTWG)	
Naw Ler Htoo	Chairperson	KTWG	
Saw Ma Htee	MTT Coordinator	KTWG	
Saw Law Eh Moo	Secretary	Karen Education Department (KED)	<a href="mailto:laweh82@gmail.com">laweh82@gmail.com</a>

### Focus Groups (20. March 2014)

Three Focus Group discussions with parents (9), teachers (4) and children (11) from six villages (Hliangbwe Township and project target area): PatuKlawPhaw, PlawNya Thee, Htee Moo Hta, Pee Thu Hta, Nya Pa Thee Kee, Ye Bu village.

### **Site visit and Focus Group discussions (23. March 2014)**

Parents (41), PTA members (5), Teachers (2), and children (49) from the Maepra village (PaingKyon Township and project target area); additionally Government teachers (5) from Tan Ta Pin, Moe NaingTaung, and Moe Naing village.

This site visit was accompanied by the Karen State Education Department Assistant Director, U Win Tint; U TunKoKo, Sub-Township Administrator; U Saw AungNaingThein, Border Affairs and Security Office (Natala) Administrator; three armed and motorized Police officers.

### **Annex 2: List of available documents**

- SEE NORAD Project Proposal
- End of Project report
- ADRA NORAD2 Baseline Report
- SEE NORAD Logframe-revised
- Approved project budget
- Progress Monitoring Dec 2013 (M&E File)
- Second Quarterly Report 2013
- Data collection form for community groups
- Second quarterly report KTWG
- ACS TOT teacher training report
- Several files on forming PTAs



*Final Evaluation*

*Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Final Evaluation*

***Norad GLO-3768 QZA-10/0939***

***ADRA Norway 13NOR-DEV004 (Myanmar)***

*Support for Education in Post-Conflict South-Eastern Myanmar*

## **I. CONTEXT**

### **1.1 Project Background**

(Description of project here: Background, problem, ADRA's "solution", logframe)

#### **The Issue**

Children across Myanmar have for long suffered from both poor quality and limited access to schooling. This acute problem is worse in the remote mountainous regions of Southeastern Myanmar, which have been plagued with decades of conflict between ethnic armed non-state actors and the military government, until elections were held in November 2010. Ethnic education systems have been developed in Southeastern Myanmar, in particular by the Karen and the Mon ethnic groups. However, these education systems are neither formally recognized nor adequately resourced and are currently not integrated into the national education system.

The GoM embarked on an ambitious reform process aimed at fast tracking the country's social and economic development. In the Education sector, the reforms commenced with the Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR), which comprises of a rapid review of policy and education data, a detailed review and analysis and the preparation of an Education plan. While the GoM's education reform agenda is a positive step towards addressing the dire state of education in Myanmar, it had not, at the time of developing the project proposal, significantly engaged with ethnic education leaders.

#### **The Plan to Meet the Problem**

To deal with the challenges, the Southeast Education Project was conceptualized and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency ADRA-Myanmar, in partnership with ADRA Norway and ADRA UK, have been implementing a 10-month pilot project code-named the South East Education Project to support education of conflict affected communities in Hlaingbwe township, Kayin state for the last 6 months, since April 2013. The project has been enhancing the provision of quality basic education by supporting the continuity of basic education currently being delivered within Myanmar both through the SDA Mission and from across the border through the Karen Teachers Working Group (KTWG).

## **The project objectives**

The overall objective of the project was to contribute to promoting peace and integration among various ethnic groups. This was envisaged to be attained through two components that are mutually inclusive and complementary.

### ***Component 1.***

- Renovated/refurbished 18 village primary schools to permanent or semi-permanent buildings of good quality.
- Adequately equipped 110 teachers and 3225 students from 48 village schools teaching and learning materials.
- Supported 60 teachers in 30 ACS schools with a monthly stipend subsidy for 2013-2014 school year.
- Trained 40 teachers from ACS schools to improve their teaching skills through pre-service, in-service and follow up training.

### ***Component 2.***

Provision of dialogue platforms for ethnic education actors and other stakeholders (CBOs, NGOs on both sides of the border and education authorities within Myanmar) to enhance cooperation in/for future.

The project was expected to contribute to MDG1 targets 1.A and 2 as well as MDG2 target 2.A related to poverty eradication and UPE respectively.

Backed by a USD 540,000 grant, the project has been implemented in Paing Kyone sub-township, Hlaingbwe Township Kayin State and in Mon State, within areas that are State and/or NSAG controlled, working with both government and community-supported schools to renovate classrooms and supply of furniture, school uniforms and stationery for both teachers and pupils. It is expected to reach a total of 170 teachers and 3225 students from 48 village schools with training, teaching and learning materials, as well as supportive supervision and mentoring.

## II. EVALUATION GOALS AND ISSUES TO BE STUDIED

### 2.1 Final Evaluation

#### 2.1.1 Evaluation's main goals:

- i. Assess project performance at each level (activities, outputs, outcomes and goal) against the indicators set in the latest version of the log frame, with emphasis on the outcome/objective level;
- ii. Identify possible unexpected events of significant character (positive and/or negative) outside the project that have contributed to the project's progress or lack of progress;
- iii. Investigate whether there were unexpected results (positive and/or negative) that were not part of the original project plan;
- iv. Draw lessons learnt and/or describe relevant experiences that will result in a change of strategies/ methods in future interventions, and verify whether they are common to other local organizations engaged with the same thematic area/ beneficiary population;
- v. Mention the evaluations that took place in the run-up to the project or during the project period, and identify the extent to which they resulted in changes/improvements to the project implementation or design;
- vi. Describe and assess the cooperation between ADRA Norway and the Myanmar office, esp. the former's added value to the project; emphasize sharing of responsibility and work, dialog, meeting arenas and competence building of the partner office by ADRA Norway;
- vii. Assess the plans for future intervention and make recommendations in light of the findings of the current evaluation.

#### 2.1.2 Issues to be covered:

Besides clearly addressing these main objectives, the final evaluation will also include a comprehensive analysis of the project following five fundamental criteria based on the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria (which may or may not overlap with the objectives laid out above): **quality and relevance of design; effectiveness; efficiency of planning and implementation; impact; sustainability**. The specific questions to be addressed are provided below. The inferences drawn must be underpinned by sufficient analysis/justification.

#### *Quality and Relevance of Design*

- 1.a) To what extent were the objectives relevant to the needs of the beneficiaries?
- 2.b) Were there any major gaps (in terms of needs) that were not addressed by the project?

#### *Effectiveness*



- 2.a) To what extent was the purpose of the project achieved? Refer to quantitative assessments as far as possible (baseline values and end-line values of the indicators). Include also qualitative assessments e.g. opinions on the project's effectiveness based on impressions and interviews with direct and indirect beneficiaries (both male and female), government employees, local leaders, community members etc.
- 2.b) What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of each objective component?
- 2.c) Describe any major failures of the project, explaining why they have occurred.
- 2.d) Describe any unforeseen results (whether positive or negative).
- 2.e) Identify any exceptional experiences that should be highlighted e.g. case studies, stories, best practice.

*Efficiency of Planning and Implementation*

- 3.a) Were activities cost-efficient?
- 3.b) Was the project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?
- 3.c) Did the project have the right HR skills, resources and systems in place to achieve the objectives?
- 3.d) Does the project have a good set of M&E plans? Was monitoring data collected as planned, stored and used to inform future plans?
- 3.e) How were working relationships within the teams (including not only the local project teams but also the supporting staff from the main country offices)?
- 3.f) How were working relationships with stakeholders e.g. government offices, local leaders, community members etc.

*Impact*

- 4.a) To what extent has the project succeeded in improving women's livelihoods and their ability to participate socially and economically in their society?
- 4.b) Do children enjoy better perspectives for the future due to improved access to/quality of education?

*Sustainability*

- 5.a) What is the social and political acceptance of the project?
- 5.b) To what extent are the benefits of the project likely to continue after donor funding ceased?
- 5.c)
- 5.d) What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the project?

### 2.1.3 Cross-cutting issues:

- *Gender*: did the project pursue a gender-sensitive approach?
- *Conflict sensitivity*: did the project succeed in strengthening the “connectors” and weakening the “dividers” existing among social groups within the local community? Did the project inadvertently cause any tensions, or did it contribute to further peace and harmony among people in or around the intervention area?
- *Climate or environmental impact*: did the project make any direct or indirect contribution to environmental protection? If so, how? Were there any negative environmental impacts of the project?
- *Strengthening of civil society*: did the project contribute to the strengthening of civil society (in the local community or at a higher level)? If so, how?
- *Coordination with government/other NGOs*: did the project fit with the government’s priorities and official plans and goals? Did ADRA, particularly the project team, seek to cooperate and coordinate efforts with other NGOs active in the same intervention area? Give examples.

## 2.2 **Intended use of results**

The most straightforward use of the evaluation results is expected to be in terms of future project design and implementation, particularly of follow-up projects in the same geographical and/or thematic area. The evaluation report is likely to be accessed mostly by ADRA; nevertheless it will be made available to all interested parties.

In this sense the report will also be used as a key accountability tool, not the least to the main project donor, namely Norad, which will post it on its website for free download. Thus the results will potentially achieve a broader public and be useful to other NGOs engaged in similar areas of work.

### III. EVALUATION PRINCIPLES

The evaluation will be guided by the following ethical rules/considerations:

- *Openness* – of information given, to the highest possible degree to all involved parties;
- *Publicity/public access* – to the results when there are not special consideration against this;
- *Broad participation* – the interest parties should be involved when relevant/possible;
- *Reliability and independence* – the evaluation should be conducted so that findings and conclusions are correct and trustworthy.

### IV. METHODOLOGY AND ACTIVITIES

The final evaluation will rely on a quantitative survey and qualitative methods, involving the main local stakeholders. Specifically, the following main activities will be carried out (this list is not necessarily chronological, nor exhaustive, and should be adapted by the evaluation team as needed):

- 4.1 Review of project documentation:** Review existing project documents (Norad and ADRA project proposals, logframes, budgets, M&E plans, project agreements etc.), DIPs and, if necessary, quarterly narrative and financial reports and midterm evaluation reports (ongoing projects), final evaluation of preceding projects, MoU with governments, government’s policy documents and other documents seen as relevant for understanding the project and its outcomes;
- 4.2 Preparation:** At a preliminary phase, the evaluation team will perform thorough stakeholder identification and develop survey questionnaires. If judged relevant by the evaluator, qualitative evaluation tools for focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) will also be developed at this point. Examples of stakeholders are: ADRA’s staff members, government offices (e.g. ministry of education, local government etc.), local community leaders, members and representatives etc. The evaluation team will also develop a detailed plan for the evaluation, including activity schedule;
- 4.3 Qualitative and quantitative survey/ field visits:** Random sampling and implementation of the survey; household interviews; *in situ* visit of the projects for observation of activities and outputs (pictures should be taken if necessary); (ii) In-depth interviews with key informants identified by the evaluation team; (iii) Focus-group discussions with key stakeholders or groups. Selected groups may be invited to more in-depth discussions, triggered by using visual/ PRA (participatory rural appraisal) tools such as Venn diagrams, matrix and ranking. “Most significant change (MSC) stories” constitutes a further qualitative evaluation method that may be used.

#### 4.4 Data analysis and drafting of the final evaluation reports.

### V. DELIVERABLES

The following are to be delivered by the evaluation team to the local ADRA office management:

- *Preparation documents*: main documents used to guide the evaluation process and specific activities, specifically survey questionnaires, evaluation plan and activity schedule;
- *Oral/Power Point presentation*: the evaluation team will present to the management and key staff of the local ADRA office the main preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations;

The following are to be delivered by the evaluation team to ADRA Norway:

- *A contractual response to this ToR*
- *A Final evaluation report*<sup>27</sup>

The content of the report should include at minimum:

- ✓ Executive summary
- ✓ Summary of project/project activities
- ✓ Evaluation methodology
- ✓ Results and findings
- ✓ Discussion
- ✓ Conclusions and recommendations

The appendices should include, besides other pertinent technical or supporting documentation, the following:

- ✓ ToR for the evaluation;
- ✓ A list of places visited;
- ✓ A list of persons interviewed
- ✓ A list of documents reviewed;
- ✓ Data collection instruments.
- ✓ Pictures showing results

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<sup>27</sup> To Included project logframe, containing targets, baseline and endline values for each indicator

## VI. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CONSULTANCY

- 6.1 ADRA Norway requests the consultant(s) to prepare a tentative timeframe for the completion of the assignment. The consultant(s) is/are to commence with the assignment as soon as possible.
- 6.2 ADRA Norway requests that the Consultant(s) prepare a cost analysis for the entire assignment, including travel costs.
- 6.3 The consultant(s) will be supervised by ADRA Norway. The consultant(s) will work closely with the local ADRA team, having the Project Director as the primary contact.
- 6.4 The consultant(s) will work out of their home location, with travel to the project area
- 6.5 The consultant(s) will be paid in the following manner: (i) 20% upon signature of the contract; and (ii) 80% upon submission and ADRA Norway's approval of all outputs listed under section 5 above.
- 6.6 Qualifications and experience. The consultant(s) assigned to the job must have demonstrated knowledge of current evaluation theory and practice and several years of experience in evaluating development projects, preferably those that are related to the field of education and community development. The consultant(s) should have a good understanding of Myanmar.
- 6.7 The consultant(s) should present a proposal to ADRA Norway briefly outlining (i) a methodology for conducting the work under this consultancy (max 2 pages); (ii) a proposed work plan (max 5 pages); (iii) the names and CVs of the individual consultants to be assigned to the job; (iv) the estimated number of days that each of the consultants will work on the assignment

ADRA Norway will under no circumstances increase the agreed amount of the consultancy once a contract has been drawn up.

## **VII. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **7.1 ADRA Norway**

- a) Provide all the required information and documents to the consultant(s);
- b) Coordinate the process
- c) Approve final reports.

### **7.2 ADRA Myanmar**

- a) Provide leadership and coordination throughout the planning and execution of the process and supervise the entire process;
- d) Coordinate the entry briefing and provide additional project documents requested by the consultant(s);
- e) Introduce consultant(s) to partners;
- f) Chair regular review meetings on the progress of the activities once the process commences at the project level;
- g) Mobilize the community and leadership;
- h) Inform the community about the final evaluation and prepare them for the various roles they will play;
- i) Ensure all relevant authorization for the final evaluation is sought beforehand from the community elders;
- j) Mobilize participants taking part in household interviews, FGDs and KII;
- k) Arrange meetings with the FGDs participants;
- l) Ensure full and timely participation of key stakeholders;
- m) Identify, recruit the enumerators, facilitators and note takers for data collection;
- n) Agree with the terms of payment before the evaluation process starts;
- o) Pay enumerators, facilitators and note takers after the successful completion of the evaluation;
- p) Review the report and provide feedback.

### 7.3 Consultant(s)

- a) Get input on purpose and objective from partners;
- b) Prepare detailed plan for data collection and analysis to achieve final evaluation objectives;
- c) Develop a detailed timeline to facilitate information collection and reporting;
- d) Review all relevant secondary sources of data and any relevant information for the final evaluation;
- e) Develop all necessary data collection tools and present them for review by ADRA team and stakeholders before use;
- f) Develop a final evaluation plan and compute;
- g) Train the enumerators , facilitators and note takers on how to collect data;
- h) Conduct key informant interviews;
- i) Conduct data analysis and write a draft final evaluation report;
- j) Present draft report to ADRA team and key stakeholders for review and inputs;
- k) Incorporate the feedback into the report and develop a final evaluation report.

## VIII. LIST OF CONTACTS

### ADRA Myanmar

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## Annex 4: Interviews Questions

### 1. Quality and relevance of project design

*(Guiding questions can be paraphrased or modified for better understanding)*

- Have partners been consulted by ADRA during the project design phase and if yes, what was their input or contribution?
- Have the partners felt informed enough about the overall project concept?
- Have all partners/stakeholders been able to get familiar with the projects Overall Objectives and other planned details of the project at the beginning?
- Do partners/stakeholders/staff think the project responds to the needs of the target groups? If yes, in which way is the project beneficial for the target groups?
- What was the level of relevance of this project and was any adaptation necessary?
- Did the intervention logic hold true? (LF, OVIs are SMART?)
- Did stakeholders / partners support the project intervention and supported the project a positive view of the implementation?
- Was the timescale and range of activities realistic with regard to stakeholders' capacity?
- Did the project have a build-in community development approach for mobilizing community members?

### 2. Effectiveness

*(Guiding questions can be paraphrased or modified for better understanding)*

- How did the M&E system work, and what were the challenges? Are there any plans for improvement? Did the partners have effective M&E systems in place to capture data on time and deliver to the project management?
- Did ADRA have an effective report system in place to capture all data on time, including data from partners?
- Did the project have anti-corruption tools in place or were they built into the project?
- How was the communication between stakeholders/partners and the project management designed, next to the official meetings conducted in component 2?
- Were project team members able to contribute to an effective dialogue between partners, government offices and ADRA?
- Have stakeholders been involved in the school building assessment and repair process? If yes, what was their part of the process?
- How can the cooperation between the partners and ADRA be described? Are there issues that need to be discussed before launching the next project phase?
- What are the indicators for measuring whether or not teachers acquired improved teaching skills through the ToT sessions?
- Regarding financial support for the partner CBOs, how was this set up and managed? Are there any suggestions of how this could be set up better to be more effective?
- How were the CBOs been supported to build-up capacity for managing activities? What resources did the CBO have available?



### **3. Efficiency of planning and implementation**

*(Guiding questions can be paraphrased or modified for better understanding)*

- Have community members been involved in the planning and conduction of school repair and how was it organized?
- Have community members been motivated to be part of the school repair process and will they be able to contribute in future again?
- Did ADRA and its partners frame their cooperation into a formal agreement, i.e. anMoU?
- Was the range of activities carried out by the partners in range with their capacity?
- How was the ToT organized and conducted? Did any challenges occur?
- Who participated in the assessment of necessary school repair and who made the final decision?
- To what degree were inputs provided and available at planned costs (or lower)?
- Was the project able to deliver the outputs as planned and within the timeframe?
- Was the LF used as a management tool and overall guidance, and was a detailed work plan in place?
- Were activities implemented as planned and how were delays rectified?
- How well were activities monitored and how flexible was the project in adapting to changing needs?
- Did the management system and decision processes allow efficient and timely implementation?
- Was the M&E system well designed and able to capture efficient data, including success stories (ADRA and Partner)?
- Was ADRA able to hire adequate trained staff for the project?

### **4. Impact**

*(Guiding questions can be paraphrased or modified for better understanding)*

- What is the direct impact or prospects toward impact at the Overall Objective (OO) level?
- Were the target realistic and was the project able to meet them?
- Did the project management identify any factors that jeopardized the projects direct impact?
- Have communities been satisfied with the results of the project, in particular with the school repair?
- Did the project contribute to a constructive dialogue between the GoM and ethnic education leaders?
- Were ethnic education leaders able to address their concerns regarding an inclusive approach to education?
- Was the project team able to build enough trust among the communities and has ADRA's reputation been built up?
- Did you see any unplanned positive results during or after implementation?
- Did the project contribute to unity among ethnic communities?

- Did the project strengthen the partners and their capacity to conduct activities under their control?
- To which extent is the child-centered teaching approach incorporated in the curriculum and internalized by teachers?
- Did the project capture any results from the attempt to start engage parents and the community in school affairs?
- After ToT, what did the teachers who attended try different? How is the follow-up of teachers organized and how frequently?

## **5. Potential Sustainability**

*(Guiding questions can be paraphrased or modified for better understanding)*

- What is the level of ownership of the project by target groups and what are the prospects?
- What is the level of policy (authority) support provided by the GoM and the degree of interaction between the project and policy level?
- How well is the project contributing to the partners institutional and management capacity?
- To what degree are project partners being developed (technically, financially, managerially) to continue delivering services?
- To what extent are relevant target groups actively involved in decision-making concerning project orientation and implementation?
- Are the beneficiaries and/or relevant authorities able to afford maintenance of school buildings?

## **6. Cross-cutting issues**

*(Guiding questions can be paraphrased or modified for better understanding)*

- Did the project promote inclusiveness of people with disabilities (PwD)?
- Did the project include environmental aspects while building / refurbishing schools (e.g. non-toxic colors, placement of waste bins and training of how to deal with waste more environmentally friendly)?
- Did ADRA discuss the gender issue with partners and seek ways to address them in adequate ways, e.g. recruiting female ToT trainers?
- Did ADRA nurture an understanding among the team of how to work in conflict areas and apply appropriate mediation / mitigation tools?

## Annex 5: Focus group discussion and assignments

Focus Groups SEE Project Evaluation 20. & 23.March 2014

Parents - Teachers- Students

Time: 13:00 - 18:00

Time	Students	Parents	Teachers
13:00	<b>Introduction (What and Why)</b>		
13:30	Discussion with <b>Matthias and Saw Lay Ka Paw</b>	Group work: List all positive aspects that come with the involvement in SMC but also the challenges Discuss in the group what decisions you need to be make in your village that the SMC is fully functioning (use flipchart)  <u>Facilitated by Saw Loving</u>	Group work: List the TOT topics and discuss in the group about how you implemented what you learned (use flipchart) List and discuss your needs (what you like to learn) for the next TOT
	<u>Group work:</u> Please draw your village school Please draw a picture about your daily activity	FG Discussion with <b>Matthias and Saw Loving</b>	FG Discussion with <b>Saw Lay Ka Paw</b>
16:00	Collect drawings	<u>Presentation</u> Group work results	<u>Presentation</u> Group work results
17:00	Day reflection: What did you learn today? Video clip ( <i>Introduction by Saw Loving</i> ) and Code: sticks		

### Teachers Group work:

- A) List the TOT topics and discuss in the group about how you implemented what you learned (use flipchart)
- B) List and discuss your needs for the next TOT (what you like to learn)

### Parents Group work:

- A) List all positive aspects that come with the involvement in SMC but also the challenges and discuss how you can address the challenges (use flipchart)
- B) Discuss in the group what decisions you need to be make in your village that the SMC is fully functioning.