Myanmar

Basic Education & Gender Equality Sectoral and OR (Thematic) Report

January - December 2016



Children from P4 class creating circuits in Myitkyina, Kachin State.
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Table of Contents

Ta	ble of Contents					
Αŀ	bbreviations and Acronyms	3				
Ex	cecutive summary	4				
1.	Strategic context of 2016	5				
2.	Results in the Outcome Area	9				
	2.1 Output 1: Early Childhood Development	9				
	2.2 Output 2: Primary/Secondary/Alternative Education Delivery	10				
	2.3 Output 3: Sector Performance	12				
	2.4 Output 4: Education in Emergencies (EiE)	13				
	2.5 Results Assessment Framework	15				
3.	Financial Analysis	16				
	Table 1: Planned budget by Programme Area	16				
	Table 2: Country-level thematic contributions received in 2016	16				
	Table 3: Expenditures by Outcome Area	17				
	Table 4: Thematic expenses by Programme Area	17				
4.	Future Work Plan	19				
	Table 6. Planned budget and available resources for 2017 (in US dollar)	21				
5.	Expression of Thanks	21				
Ar	nnex 1: Human Interest Story	23				
Do	onor feedback form	26				

Abbreviations and Acronyms

BEGE Basic Education and Gender Equality

BoQBEP Building on Quality Basic Education Programme

CBO Community-Based Organisation

CESR Comprehensive Education Sector Review

CFS Child Friendly School

DBE Department of Basic Education

DRR Disaster Risk Reduction

ECD Early Childhood Development

ECCD Early Childhood Care and Development

EiE Education in Emergencies

EXCEL Extended and Continuous Education and Learning

GoM Government of Myanmar

HT Head Teacher

IDP Internally Displaced Person

KG Kindergarten

LEP Language Enrichment Programme

MDG Millennium Development Goal

MIMU Myanmar Information Management Unit

MLRC Myanmar Literacy Resource Centre

MoE Ministry of Education

MoSWRR Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement

NESP National Education Strategic Plan

NFPE Non formal Primary Education

NGO Non-Governmental Organisation

NLD National League for Democracy

PBEA Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy

PTA Parent Teacher Association

QBEP Quality Basic Education Programme

SITE School-Based In-Service Teacher Education

WinS Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools

WSA Whole State Approach

Executive summary

Myanmar's constitution guarantees access to primary school to all children, however, consistently low levels of investment have prevented many children from realising their human right to education. Although Myanmar reached a high primary net enrolment rate of 95 per cent in 2014¹, there are still upwards of 2 million children aged 5-17 years old out of school². For children aged 7-11, the school attendance rate is over 80 per cent; but, declines sharply towards the end of primary school³. Nevertheless, significant continuous efforts are being made by the Government of Myanmar (GoM) to enhance the education sector, most notably the GoM led a Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR) from 2012 to 2016 through which is developed new legislation, and policies and the CESR has culminated in the development and launch of a National Education Sector Plan (NESP) that guide strategic direction of an investment into the education sector for the next five years, thereby improving education for children throughout the country.

UNICEF Myanmar, under the Basic Education and Gender Equality (BEGE) Outcome Area, aims to increase the number and proportion of children accessing and completing quality basic education in targeted townships. This contributes to 2014-2017 UNICEF Strategic Plan Outcomes: 03: WASH and 05: Education. In addition, the UNICEF Education section works to enhance social cohesion, provides humanitarian assistance for Education in Emergencies (EiE), and overlaps in a number of crosscutting areas such as gender equality, child protection, health and nutrition and communications and advocacy. In 2016, UNICEF Myanmar continued to support the GoM to improve access to quality school readiness and primary level education for all children in Myanmar by ensuring that national education policies and plans are inclusive, informed and actionable; and delivering quality education services to children in 34 core townships throughout the country.

Upstream advocacy and technical assistance, especially in the latter part of 2016 has supported reform, specifically helping to support the finalization of the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) building on findings from the UNICEF-supported Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR). As a result of upstream work sector coordination was strengthened and maintained throughout the protracted political handover from one administration to another, through meetings of the Joint Education Sector Working Group and Education Thematic Working Group and its Sub-Working Groups. However, for the first six months of 2016 due to a risk management decision of the QBEP partners, ongoing advocacy to support rollout and institutionalization of Kindergarten in Myanmar's education system was paused. However this vital facet of an inclusive, quality education system was prioritised by the MoE and agreed as a key area for the Building on Quality Basic Education Programme phase, currently under implementation. The Multi-level Capacity Gap Analysis of MoE, supported by UNICEF, initiated in October 2015, is feeding into the Ministry's national Human Resource Development Plan, having yielded significant evidence.

UNICEF also contributed to enhanced social cohesion through the Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy (PBEA) initiative, concluded in 2016. PBEA worked to bridge non-state schools being

 $^{^{\}mathrm{1}}$ UNESCO 2016. Global Education Monitoring Report.

² UNICEF Myanmar Situation Analysis based on the 2014 Census. School aged population: 11.2 million = 4.8 million (5-10 year olds) +6.4 million (11-17 year olds)

³ According to UNICEF Situation Analysis based on the data from Dr. Muta (presentation), JICA consultant, this means that: for 100 students who begin grade 1, only 70 complete primary, 60 enrol in lower secondary, 45 complete lower secondary, 38 join upper secondary school and only 30 take the matriculation exam.

operated by sectoral departments of ethnic armed groups with the formal government school system through joint head teacher and teacher training. At the policy level, language of instruction and its links to ethnic identity remains a key conflict driver and the development of state and national level multilingual education policies has been advanced significantly with UNICEF taking a leadership role bringing diverse partners together in development of national and state-level multilingual education policy which meets the needs of all ethno-linguistic groups for learning of mother-tongue, national, and international languages, alleviating conflict, and promoting social cohesion. Through a strategic partnership with University of Melbourne, and in close collaboration with the Ministry, technical experts, and language and culture groups, UNICEF's support for facilitated stakeholder dialogues has resulted in consensus around an inclusive draft policy framework, which includes sign language for people with disabilities, which has been further advanced through two national level language policy workshops in Nay Pyi Taw in 2016. While much progress has been made, the issue of multi-lingual education remains sensitive and subject to political fluctuations, requiring caution in moving ahead.

1. Strategic context of 2016

Myanmar's constitution guarantees access to free and compulsory primary education to all children and as a result, education remains a high priority on the national development agenda, a fact reasserted by newly elected National League for Democracy (NLD)-led government in April 2016. Historically the NLD has emphasised delivery of education and healthcare as basic rights previously denied by decades of chronic underinvestment. After taking office in 2016, the government took a 100-day period of reflection and stock-take to establish policy direction in line with their stated priorities and the NLD manifesto.

According to the Government of Myanmar, the proportion of the Government budget allocated to Education increased from 3.8 per cent in 2011/2012 to 6.5 per cent in 2015/16⁴; however, this is still the lowest level of education investment in the ASEAN region⁵ and is far below the 20 per cent recommended allocation by the Global Partnership for Education, to which Myanmar is currently in preparatory work to accede.

School attendance rates for those aged 5-17 are at only 64 per cent⁶. Primary school typically covers children aged 6-10 years and aggregate statistics show attendance at around 82-85 per cent. Despite progress, over two million 5-17 school-aged children are out of school⁷. School attendance starts to decline sharply after primary, with only 38 per cent of students sitting the matriculation exam⁸, and only one third of these passing. Commonly cited reasons for children not in school are the opportunity costs of education, especially in the transition from primary to secondary, low perceived relevance of education offered, and, for boys especially, opportunities for unskilled paid employment. Corporal punishment in school is pervasive and children from different ethno-linguistic backgrounds struggle with language barriers. Children in humanitarian and conflict-affected areas struggle to access school and the enabling policy environment is not sufficiently conflict-sensitive or inclusive. Two thirds of

⁴ Data provided by the Ministry of Education

⁵ UNESCO Institute for Statistics database

⁶ The Population and Housing Census of Myanmar, 2014- released May 2015

⁷ Census data, 2014? or ibid

⁸ Especially for boys, from 85 per cent for 9 year olds to 44 per cent for 15 year olds;

children with disabilities are out of school.⁹ Gender parity has largely been reached at primary, but disparities remain, with poorest girls least likely to transition to secondary and increasing participation of girls in education not translating into increasing participation in decision-making roles in the workplace and in society.¹⁰ High rates of child labour, dropout and underperformance of boys at secondary level are concerns. For those who stay in school, learning outcomes are poor. According to the World Bank study, in Grades 2 and 3, 'only 23 per cent and 48 per cent of the students, respectively, reached curricular expectations and could be considered good readers.¹¹ The assessment system currently tests memorization not critical thinking and the vitally needed 'head start' through quality pre-school, has an enrolment rate of just 23 per cent.

Despite persistent disparities and challenges not least, the fluid context of 2016, many targeted results have been reached by the BEGE programme. However, with the protracted nature of the political handover, the first half of 2016 was uncertain, as anticipated, with changes that affected all administration and key policies - including in the education sector through, for example, MoE's departmental restructuring process and institutional uncertainty regarding establishment of new bodies required under the National Education Law (2014) and its Amendment (2016). A shortage of human resources to implement reforms, frequent turnover, transfer and over-burdening of existing staff within the MoE at all levels remained a constraint to programme implementation in 2016.

UNICEF Myanmar, under the BEGE Outcome Area, aims to increase the number and proportion of children accessing and completing quality basic education in targeted townships. This contributes 2014-2017 UNICEF Strategic Plan Outcomes: 03: WASH; and 05: Education. BEGE works to support GoM to improve access to quality school readiness and primary level education for all children in Myanmar, to enhance social cohesion and peacebuilding, and to provide humanitarian assistance for Education in Emergencies (EiE). Education work in Myanmar also overlaps a number of crosscutting areas such as Early Childhood Development (ECD), Gender Equality, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and WASH in Schools (WinS).

UNICEF's core education work is achieved through the multi-donor funded Quality Basic Education Programme (QBEP) 2012-2016, which ended in June 2016 and through its follow-on programme, Building on QBEP (BoQBEP), operationalised on 1 July 2016 and being implemented until 30 June 2017. QBEP aimed to support the Government of Myanmar to improve access to education for all children in Myanmar by: i) Ensuring that national education policies and plans are inclusive and informed; and ii) Delivering quality education services to children in 34 targeted townships throughout the country. QBEP was supported by the Multi Donor Education Fund (MDEF), comprising Australia, Denmark, the European Union, Norway and the United Kingdom in partnership with the Government of Myanmar.

Given the conclusion of QBEP on 30 June 2016 and its funding balance of USD 11,820,467, the QBEP development partners held a consultation meeting with the Ministry of Education (MoE) in May 2016 to inquire as to their renewed priorities with the commencement of the new Government in April

⁹ Situation Analysis of Children with Disabilities in Myanmar (2016) Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement,

¹⁰ Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Myanmar: A Situation Analysis (2016), Ministry of Social Welfare, UN agencies.

¹¹ Work Bank Group (2015). Myanmar Early Grade Reading Assessment for the Yangon Region. Washington DC: Work Bank Group.

2016, in order that QBEP's remaining funds could potentially support such priorities in the coming year (July 2016- June 2017). As a result, the MoE proposed a set of priority activities under four thematic issues or packages: (1) National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) support, including the finalization, printing, launch and dissemination of the NESP; (2) Kindergarten (KG) support, building on the Government's initiative of national KG curriculum rollout that began in 2015, and providing KG kits for all KG classrooms nationwide including monastic and ethnic schools, complementing the kit that the Government has distributed; (3) Rakhine support, is a continued package of support to Rakhine State affected by July 2015 floods and landslides as well as ethnic tensions. The support includes repair and reconstruction of affected schools, as well as provision of education to approximately 5,700 children in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps along with advocacy for expanded MoE support to the learning needs of these children, and (4) Primary support, responding to the Government's renewed commitment to support Non Formal, Alternative Education., aiming to address the learning needs of the upwards of 2 million out of school children in Myanmar. The MoE and Development Partners' technical teams held discussions, and proposals were agreed for support to the four priority areas.

In addition, UNICEF works to enhance social cohesion through the PBEA initiative. Another complementary facet of Myanmar BEGE programming, PBEA was a global partnership between UNICEF, the Government of the Netherlands and the national governments of 14 participating countries and other key supporters. BEGE has designed to improve education and peacebuilding results through work with 1) policies, 2) institutions, 3) individual capacities, 4) access to conflict-sensitive education, and 5) evidence-based research. BEGE has mainstreamed PBEA across its regular portfolio, through the revision of key activities to reflect conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding principles, to reach children not yet reached, and to improve understandings of evolving conflict dynamics to inform future programming.

Flexible thematic contributions have allowed UNICEF leverage other donor-funding to enhance its technical and programmatic support to quality school readiness and primary and lower secondary level education for all children in Myanmar. These activities have influenced policies, increased the evidence base for provision of quality education, and provided limited service delivery in targeted townships in 2016.

As stated in the 2015 thematic report, UNICEF Myanmar's education work follows an equity approach; programmes aim to ensure that all children, everywhere can achieve their potential through education in line with the mandate of the Convention on the Rights of Child. As such, clear, equity-focused criteria were applied to the selection of the original targeted townships for education activities. The primary priority was to support the most disadvantaged townships, in order to reach marginalised children and to reduce disparities in management capacity and resourcing. Although this has meant that only 11 per cent of townships in Myanmar are reached, working across all the States and Regions was seen as strategic, and was requested by MoE, because it has maximised the number of State/Region-level officers and institutions involved in activities.

In 2016, with support from UNICEF to the Ministry of Education, access to quality education was improved for students at all levels of education, especially for the most disadvantaged children focusing on pre-primary and primary education. The primary net enrolment rate is 100.92 per cent (girls- 99.50 per cent; boys-102.31 per cent). The primary education net enrolment rate indicates the

gradual increase at the national level as per the trend from 2012 (86.37 per cent), 2013 (86.38 per cent) and 2015 (101.21 per cent). NER for 2014 stood at 94.48 per cent from the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the NER currently exceeds 100 per cent due to inconsistencies in the population and enrolment data (due in part to the fact that no national population census was carried out for 30 years until 2014). In terms of completion, the primary completion rate is 66.84 per cent (girls-69.6 per cent; boys-64.2 per cent). From 2012 (73.82 per cent), to 2014 (72.97 per cent) and 2015 (70.01 per cent), the primary national education completion rate of declined by 3 per cent. However, in UNICEF supported townships, through the Quality Basic Education Programme enrolment increased by 3.35 per cent. Furthermore, a University of York independent study concluded in June 2016 found that teaching practices improved in 38 per cent of teachers who had received QBEP-supported training, against a target of 35 per cent.

Under UNICEF management, QBEP was implemented to support the Ministry of Education (MoE) to lead the Government's education reform process through the Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR). A critical successful culminating achievement of the CESR initiative, in 2016, has been the production of a comprehensive, evidence-based and widely consulted upon National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) 2016-2021. As a part of this CESR process, the new basic education curriculum framework has been developed and endorsed by parliament in 2016. As a result of the endorsement of the new basic education curriculum framework, the MoE started implementation of the new, transformative education system (KG+12 years) in 2016 which means KG+ 5 years in primary education, 4 years in middle education and 3 years in high school education bringing the education cycle length into alignment with many of Myanmar's ASEAN counterparts. The new education system will be fully implemented within 6 years. As a first step, the MoE rolled out the kindergarten (KG) curriculum nationwide in 2016. Even though the QBEP ended in June, 2016, the QBEP partners extended their fund through "Building on QBEP," to support the MoE's national level priorities of NESP Completion, NESP Dissemination and implementation, KG Package for procurement of KG kits and Teacher Guides and Big books printing for Myanmar and 65 ethnic languages, a "Rakhine package" for school repair, IDP support and school reconstruction, and a "Primary Package" for Non Formal Primary Education (NFPE) implementation this year. All four packages are ongoing until 30 June 2017. During this critical political transition period, UNICEF was able to strategically support the technical development, creation, and finalization of the National Education Strategic Plan of MoE which now forms the blueprint for investment in and development of the education sector as a whole, for both MoE and all stakeholders, to yield the most equitable inclusive quality education for all children of Myanmar.

The combination of these efforts at upstream, downstream and evidence-generation levels has contributed to achieving the outcome results of the BEGE programme.

2. Results in the Outcome Area

2.1 Output 1: Early Childhood Development

In 2015, UNICEF supported MoE's introduction of Kindergarten (KG) for 5 year olds into every primary school nationally (44,000 schools) in 2016/2017 and to create ECD caregivers as a permanent teaching cadre. Further UNICEF capacity development support to create curriculum, student and teacher materials and training guidelines for the introduction of KG was requested and international and national technical assistance was sourced and provided to the MoE through UNICEF support. UNICEF also supported strengthened coordination and collaboration between MoE and key partners working in the sector, as well as the adaptation of existing Pre-School Curriculum and Care Giver Guidelines into more than 60 local languages.

Downstream, 154,675 children aged 0-5 years old in targeted townships were accessing facility based ECD services as a result of UNICEF support, up from a baseline of 8,300 in 2011-2012, and exceeding the target of 89,000. Additionally, the percentage of schools in targeted townships with ECD facilities for children aged 3-5 years old has increased from 10 per cent in 2012 to 37.5 per cent by mid-2016; and the percentage of school based ECD facilities meeting minimum quality standards in targeted townships increased from 2 per cent in 2012 to 61 per cent in 2016 as reported by DBE¹². Overall, interventions for ECD in 2016 were focussed on sustained advocacy for the development of the early learning sub-sector through the following results: Continued support to 65 ethnic language and cultural committees for their finalization of bilingual language guide for KG teachers and bilingual big story books for students (5-10 per language), 8 Technical Working Groups were supported to develop work plans and tools to be used for Early Childhood Intervention system development. Review of the ECCD Quality Indicators was initiated, led by a national consultant and participated by resource persons from MoE, MoSWRR, and NGO partners.

From July-December 2016 under Building on QBEP, the MoE Executive Committee (EC) approved the process for KG kits procurement and production; lab tests for safety were agreed, as well as a sixmonth warranty period in case of any disputes on quality. Big books and Teachers' Guide in 65 languages, the materials for which were already prepared. Implementation under the M&E subcomponents of the KG package accelerated when the first orientation of the ECD scales tools was conducted by Hong Kong University with the Yangon University of Education, in work towards adaptation of the tools for ECD scale and field test. KG Kit procurement process progressed and is expected to complete by mid-2017.

An area of emerging importance in 2016 for Myanmar is to accelerate integrated ECD, further advancing the successful growth of ECD built with UNICEF action, advocacy and coordination under QBEP. Mother Tongue Based material development for Kindergarten was supported through the capacity building of 65 Language and Cultural Committees across the country, simultaneously with advocacy on mother tongue based early education. The first ever integrated Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) service programme was designed with multi-sectoral involvement led by the Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement in collaboration with Ministry of Education,

¹² The data was provided by the Ministry of Education, for the final report of the Quality Basic Education Programme (QBEP).

Ministry of Health, Ministry of Home Affairs and others facilitated by international and national consultants supported by UNICEF.

2.2 Output 2: Primary/Secondary/Alternative Education Delivery

In 2016, UNICEF has contributed at the national and sub-national levels to the aim of MoE to improve access to education for all school-age children and enable them to complete quality basic education by providing various capacity-building and quality programme interventions such as the Child Friendly School/Language Enrichment Programme (CFS/LEP), the School-based In-service Teacher Education Programme (SITE), primary level head teacher training, Township Education Improvement Planning (TEIP), South East Asia Primary Learning Matrix, the Out-of-School-Children Initiative (OOSCI), and Non-formal Primary Education (NFPE) Programme as well as the pilot Non-formal Middle Education (NFME) Programme, through Whole State Approach (WSA), an approach that will strengthen the system building of the sub-national level education offices towards decentralization. Five States namely Kachin, Kayah, Chin, Rakhine and Mon were under the Whole State Approach, supported through QBEP and managed by UNICEF.

The South-East Asia Primary Learning Metric (SEA-PLM) is a regional initiative that serves the goal of improving quality of education and learning through the development of a common primary education learning metrics for SEAMEO Member Countries. The metrics will assess primary school grade 5 students and cover key domains of reading, writing, mathematics and global citizenship/civics education. In late 2016, the SEAMEO Secretariat, UNICEF Myanmar & EAPRO and ACER have provided technical support to the SEA-PLM Technical Team and Steering Committee to engage throughout the process of the field trial test in Myanmar

UNICEF support to teacher training reform has resulted in **School-based In-service Teacher Education** (SITE) being viewed as a potential framework for delivering accredited in-service training to teachers leading to their certification. Measuring impact of training on classroom practice is being monitored regularly and an independent evaluation of SITE was completed in 2016. The evaluation aimed to achieve three objectives: (1) provide and objective assessment of the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and likely sustainability of the SITE pilot activities to date; (2) assess what results were achieved by SITE, as well as to assess what, if any, elements of SITE should be replicated in the future; and (3) offer a comparison of the SITE model against other national and regional in-service teacher training modules that, where possible, target teachers who are both trained and untrained, and who are from state, monastic and non-state schools. UNICEF lead on drafting the Terms of Reference (TOR) which was then reviewed and approved by the QBEP partners and by an MoE Reference Group comprising seven representatives from DTET and DBE. The evaluation was carried out from late September 2015 to early February 2016. The evaluation found that SITE benefited more than 14,000 primary teachers, including newly recruited daily-wage teachers, teachers from monastic schools, and Mon National Education Committee (MNEC) schools. The evaluation identified positive aspects of SITE that are well suited to the current education climate in Myanmar. This is particularly important in the context of quickly and effectively upgrading a large cohort of under qualified teachers. The report states, "What makes the SITE model particularly suited to this challenge is the in-school distance approach and, as evidenced by the evaluation results, the enthusiasm of classroom teachers for the SITE content and approach. Also beneficial is the high level of ownership by MoE and willingness to continue with SITE."The SITE final evaluation concluded that SITE activities are in line with the overall needs of Myanmar's teachers and classrooms, although this was unintentional alignment, as the SITE planning was broadly a top-down process.

Evaluation was also conducted for another initiative, Township Education Improvement Plan, supported by UNICEF, under the QBEP. TEIP was intended to be a key tool in the decentralisation of education planning and management. However, because there was a lack of clarity as to its purpose, the activity as originally envisioned overestimated the extent to which decentralisation had taken place. Once the limitations of decentralisation became clear, TEIP became more of a useful activity in capacity development of the relevant township education officers, enabling them to plan, monitor, manage and implement quality education services. Based on the evaluation findings, the TEIP has been revised in 2016.

In Mon State, **equity of education service delivery** was enhanced by targeting all Townships and inclusion of Non State Actors, e.g. teachers of Mon National Education Committee (MNEC) benefitting from School-based In-Service Teacher Education (SITE), reinforcing conflict-sensitivity. Systematic involvement of State-level actors allowed UNICEF to cultivate stronger advocacy; accountability and transparency were increased through involvement of community members and teachers in school-based management in which they had not traditionally participated.

Total 1,034 township facilitators and 16,663 teachers "Whole States," Chin, Kachin, Kayah, Rakhine, and Mon State, were trained in Child Friendly Schools/Language Enrichment Programme (CFS/LEP) and Head Teacher Training by Department of Basic Education with UNICEF support in 2016. 182 head teachers received training on school management and leadership. School-based In-service Teacher Education (SITE) activities were conducted in townships in Rakhine (7) in Chin (5), in Kachin (3) and in Loikaw for 3 Kayah townships in September 2016. 3,098 head teachers from all 18 townships attended this training. 12,100 teachers from the 18 townships have now enrolled and are participating in the 20-week SITE course, under the guidance of trained head teachers. 782 middle school teachers from Chin & Kayah states attended a 9-day refresher training of secondary LS curriculum that focuses on psychosocial competences development for adolescents.

The NFPE program implementation in collaboration with MoE and four local NGOs partners under their respective PCAs continued in 2016. Support to NFPE from January to June 2016 garnered the following results: the NFPE programme was supported in 94 townships; and 1069 (of whom 815 were female) primary school head and teachers received the standardized test administering training for level-2 completion test. The Level-1 and 2 completion rate was 75.52 per cent and 76.61 per cent respectively (3702/5105 & 3553/4638 passed respectively calculated based on enrollment data as of December 2015) 41.15 per cent transition rate to formal grade-6 (1,688 Level 2 graduates joined formal school). UNICEF's effort to increase collaboration and cooperation between stakeholders – notably State and Regions authorities, Department of Basic Education (DBE), Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) and Community-Based Organisations (CBO) partners and private business sectors - resulted in greater demand for NFPE and contributed towards the establishment of the new Department for Alternative Education.

UNICEF commissioned independent review of its NFPE activities found that NFPE is a "much-needed initiative" providing "a second chance for some of Myanmar's 10-14-year-old children who were unable to access formal school," and that access to the formal education system following the

completion of NFPE was "sufficiently simple and was proactively supported by the Township Education Officer, Township Monitor and Head Teacher." It also concluded that the "overall re-entry rate from L1 to G6 is around 20 percent. Transition rates from L2 to G6 have seen an improvement over the period of NFPE, from the low 20s to the high 30s, suggesting that the programme has been increasingly successful in facilitating re-entry to the formal system." The review highlighted challenges and operational constraints hindering performance and NFPE's potential expansion, including 1) that NFPE is not yet flexible enough to access the hardest-to-reach children; 2) that the current model does not adequately address the opportunity cost of attendance; 3) that there is no effective mechanism to identify and map "invisible" children; and 4) that the short time frames of the NFPE centres in each community pose a challenge in engendering effective community ownership. UNICEF, to informally advocate for continued support to NFE, used the preliminary findings of the NFPE study.

2.3 Output 3: Sector Performance

The National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) 2016-2021 has been finalised, with support from UNICEF and other development partners, especially during the UNICEF- managed Building on QBEP phase. The NESP outlines an inclusive approach to improving teaching and learning, and provides the vehicle for Myanmar to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 for Education. The NESP also provides an opportunity for Myanmar to seek accession to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), and leverage GPE funds for NESP implementation.

Working closely with Australia as co-chair, UNICEF continued to play a key role in sector coordination and aid effectiveness. UNICEF and Australia have leveraged their convening power in bringing development partners together to harmonize messaging for the new government, and acted as the communication focal points between DPs and the Ministry. To support the Education Sector Coordination Committee (ESCC), a new mechanism initiated by the Ministry in November 2016, with inaugural meeting taking place in December 2016, to strengthen coordination with Development Partners (DPs), UNICEF and Australia have coordinated DP comments to ensure that the ESCC builds on lessons learned, responds to the needs of MoE decision-makers, and provides a solid platform for GPE dialogue. Through its co-chairing role of an Education Thematic Working Group (ETWG), together with Save the Children, UNICEF, has also continued to play a convening role for outreach between Government and education stakeholders more broadly, including NGOs and civil society groups.

Myanmar has also made great strides in language policy development, supported by UNICEF and University of Melbourne partners. Leveraging social cohesion impacts, the initiative has: built local understanding of multi-lingual education through supporting Myanmar's first ever International Conference on National Language Policy and Planning; enriched the knowledge base though analytical work on language diversity, inclusive communication for people with disabilities and use of English language in education; and resulted in the drafting of three state-level language policies in Mon, Kachin, and Kayin through inclusive, participatory approaches.

A multi-level Capacity Gap Assessment, undertaken by MoE with UNICEF support, has identified human resource and institutional capacity gaps across nine priority areas at central and sub-national levels. The findings provide the evidence base for institutionalisation of a more systematic, government-led and demand driven approach to capacity development for effective service delivery capacity in MoE.

The evidence base was also strengthened through the finalization of key studies, including the situation analysis of children with disabilities in Myanmar, led by Department of Social Welfare; initiation of the Out of School Children Initiative study; and a study on factors affecting drop-out from the Non-Formal Primary Equivalency Programme, all of which will inform dialogue with MoE on strengthening the inclusiveness of the education system.

A Bottleneck Analysis¹³ of gender dynamics affecting participation of girls and boys in secondary school and implications for social cohesion, was completed. The study finds that the school environment both reflects and perpetuates social norms of gender inequality, whereby girls are praised for obedience, confined to domestic spaces, and outperforming boys academically but denied leadership roles. Whereas boys tend to be valued for their physical strength; given greater leeway in behaviour by teachers but punished more severely and given less teacher attention in class; and face stronger social pressures to get paid work as labourers to contribute to family income. The study also revealed a high prevalence of corporal punishment both among girls and boys. To address these challenges, the study provides the evidence base for policy advocacy in a number of key areas, including abolition of corporal punishment in schools; improved training of teachers to better understand the different psychological and learning needs of adolescent boys and girls, and to provide stronger remedial support to struggling students; as well as awareness raising for teachers of their own unconscious gender biases, so that girls are also encouraged to become leaders, and boys are valued beyond their physical strength attributes.

UNICEF has also endeavoured to create and nurture a triangular partnership amongst Ministry of Education, Mon National Education Committee and UNICEF. UNICEF Myanmar facilitated bridging and trust-building between the MoE government system and Non-State Actors through schools grants, curriculum and in-service teacher training provision. A partnership with 65 ethnic language and cultural committees supported preparation of a bilingual teacher's guide and big storybooks for KG pupils.

2.4 Output 4: Education in Emergencies (EiE)

Under EiE in 2016, Temporary Learning Space (TLS) support shifted from purely Development Partners-led humanitarian support for TLS to a broader government-led education development response to IDP camps and nearby communities, supported by UNICEF advocacy. UNICEF intervention in crises-affected zones was strategically coordinated and implemented under UNICEF with Save the Children as the sector co-leads for EiE. This critical coordination aims to ensure timely, coherent and effective education response to hazards and disasters, by mobilizing and harmonizing stakeholders' response in a strategic manner. This emergency support is therefore a crucial programmatic underpinning to subsequent interventions within these crises-affected zones.

In 2016, UNICEF and partners (Government/ CSOs) provided access to education in Rakhine and Kachin through enhanced subnational sector coordination where. 32,476 IDP students accessed to preprimary, primary and post-primary education in temporary learning facilities and in both Kachin and

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¹³This small scale study was conducted in Kayah state.

Rakhine, with UNICEF support. They also received integrated supports like psychosocial supports, child protection and life-skills supports.

UNICEF Education continued its support to Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp students by provision and maintenance of temporary learning facilities, teaching and learning aids, incentives to volunteer teachers, and through co-leading EiE coordination in Kachin and Rakhine. These efforts enabled UNICEF to achieved 79 per cent of targeted 3-17 years children (32,476/49,100) ¹⁴ to access pre-primary, primary and post-primary education in temporary learning facilities and in both Kachin and Rakhine. In Kachin, UNICEF targeted 13,100 IDP students to access pre-primary and primary and post-primary education in temporary learning facilities in non-government controlled areas, out of which, UNICEF reached 6,159 students (47 per cent) who accessed learning opportunities in safe learning facilities. In Rakhine, UNICEF targeted 36,000 IDP students to access pre-primary and primary and post-primary education in temporary learning facilities in IDP camps. Of this target number, UNICEF reached 26,316 students (73 per cent) who accessed learning opportunities in safe learning facilities. Funding constraints (62 per cent funded from HAC appeal) and the limited number of implementing partners on the ground in these challenging circumstances, were the biggest challenges for education in emergency sector to extend its coverage to more emergency-affected children on order to ensure their right to access safe and quality education.

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¹⁴ Humanitarian action plan (HAC) target: 41,000 children accessing preprimary and primary learning opportunities, and 8,100 adolescents accessing middle school or non-formal post primary learning opportunities.'

2.5 Results Assessment Framework

No	Indicator	Baseline	Target for	As of Date	Status 2016	Primary
		2012	2017			Source
1	Primary education completion date (%)	Total-69.76; Boys-68.12; Girls-72.47%	Total-71; Boys-70; Girls-72	30.11.2016	Total-66.84; Boys-64.20; Girls069.93	MOE data
2	Existence of an effective early learning policy with clear budget allocation in place (score 1-4)	1. No early learning policy in place	4 - policy has been developed, sufficient budget allocated	13.12.2016	3. ECCD policy approved, but the ECCD national committee to oversee the implementati on of the policy not established and related budget not allocated.	ECCD Policy Document
3	Number of townships that have produced final township education improvement plans according to the standards outlined in the TEIP manual	0	53 townships (cumulative)	30.11.2016	47 townships (cumulative)	UNICEF reports
4	UNICEF-targeted children in humanitarian situations accessing formal or nonformal basic education	37,400	45,000	29.11.2016	32,476	UNICEF reports

3. Financial Analysis

The total planned budget for the Education Programme for 2016 was \$10,717,917 and the total available contributed from all sources (RR+ORR+ORE) for 2016 was \$16,094,559.

Table 1: Planned budget by Programme Area

Outcome Area 05: Education Myanmar Planned and Funded for the Country Programme 2016 (in US Dollar)

Intermediate Results	Funding Type	Planned Budget
	RR	100,000
0600/A0/04/105/007 007 ECD	ORR	974,084
	ORE	
0500 /40 /04 /405 /000 000 55 0700	RR	174,841
0600/A0/04/105/009 009- SECTOR PERFORMANCE	ORR	219,657
TENTONIVANCE	ORE	
0500/40/04/405/040 040	RR	
0600/A0/04/105/010 010- HUMANITARIAN - PEACE BUILD	ORR	151,845
DIVIANTANIAN - I LACE BOILD	ORE	4,700,000
	RR	1,454,360
0600/A0/04/922/001 001.LEADERSHIP AND TA - BEGE	ORR	2,943,130
AND IA BEGE	ORE	
Total Budget		10,717,917

Table 2: Country-level thematic contributions received in 2016

Outcome Area 05: Education Thematic Contributions Received for Outcome Area 5 by UNICEF Myanmar in 2016 (in US Dollars)		
Donors	Contribution Amount	Programmable Amount
Korean Committee for UNICEF **	99,944	95,187
Netherlands Committee for UNICEF	278,707	265,435

^{**} Received in 2014 and it has been reported in both 2014 and 2015 and no more balance left in 2016

Table 3: Expenditures by Outcome Area

Outcome Area 05 : Education Myanmar 2016 Expenditure by Key-Results Area (in US Dollars)

	Expenditure Amount					
Organizational Targets	Other Resources- Emergency	Other Resources - Regular	Regular Resources	All Program Accounts		
05-01 Early learning	-	3,026,389	79,076	3,105,465		
05-02 Equity # focus on girls# and inclusive education	219,748	2,228,503	4,979	2,453,230		
05-03 Learning and child- friendly schools	-	691,810	13,005	704,815		
05-04 Education in emergencies	1,120,497	2,818,413	201	3,939,111		
05-05 Education # General	936,623	3,081,225	1,874,089	5,891,937		
Total	2,276,867	11,846,340	1,971,351	16,094,559		

Table 4: Thematic expenses by Programme Area (in US Dollars)

Fund Category	All Programme Accounts
Year	2016
Business Area	Myanmar - 0600
Prorated Outcome Area	05 Education
Donor Class Level2	Thematic

Row Labels	Expense
Other Resources - Emergency	88,330
05-04 Education in emergencies	88,330
Other Resources - Regular	217,492
05-02 Equity # focus on girls# and inclusive education	15,266
05-03 Learning and child-friendly schools	12,215
05-04 Education in emergencies	33,399
05-05 Education # General	156,612
Grand Total	305,822

Table 5: Expenditures by Specific Interventions Codes (in US Dollars)

Table 5: Expenditures by Specific Interventions Codes (in US Dollars	
Fund Category	All Programme Accounts
Year	2016
Business Area	Myanmar - 0600
Prorated Outcome Area	05 Education
Row Labels	Expense
05-01-01 National policies on early learning and school readiness	506,771
05-01-02 Development and use of standards and measurements for	
earlylearning and school readiness	-34
05-01-03 Institutional pre-schools	2,520,516
05-01-04 Community-based child development and early learning	42,257
05-02-01 Out of School Children Initiative (OOSCI)	4,923
05-02-02 Non-formal education (including adult literacy)	1,138,732
05-02-04 Girls' Secondary Education (excluding UNGEI)	922,761
05-02-06 Education for children with disabilities	327,537
05-03-01 Education materials for learning and teaching including	
classroom technology	599,151
05-03-02 Child Friendly Schools # Education	60,534
05-03-04 Learning assessment systems	23,229
05-04-01 Risk assessments and risk informed programming (DRR and	
CCA)	1,005,067
05-04-02 Peacebuilding education	566,542
05-04-04 Education # cluster coordination in humanitarian action	1,212,431
05-04-05 Education # Emergency preparedness	6,663
05-04-06 Education - Emergency response	1,035,824
05-05-01 Education -Systems	882,445
05-05-02 Teacher development and deployment	617,112
05-05-05 Education sector plans (incl. coordinating role)	773,508
05-05-06 Education Management Information System	28,400
05-05-07 Adolescent development # building assets and skills	153,903
05-05-08 Education -technical assistance to regional and country offi	ces 2,189,135
05-05-09 Education -support to achieving global and regional goals	662,501
08-01-06 Planning # General	67,126
08-01-07 Humanitarian Planning (CAP/SRP, HAC) and review related	
activities	24,266
08-02-08 Monitoring # General	4,649
08-03-01 Cross-sectoral Communication for Development	29,354
08-03-02 Communication for Development at sub-national level	152
08-03-03 C4D # training and curriculum development	3,761
08-04-03 Early Childhood Development # General	-7,429
08-05-01 Supply # General	42,325
08-09-01 Innovation activities	16,853
08-09-06 Other # non-classifiable cross-sectoral activities	630,536
10-07-12 Management and Operations support at CO	16,542
5021 Support to MICS, DHS and other data collection systems and th	
analyses	805
7004.0 11 11 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	44306

Grand Total 16,094,559

7921 Operations # financial and administration

-14,286

4. Future Work Plan

UNICEF has been present and active in Myanmar for 60 years, and support to the education sector is a key component in the current UNICEF Country Programme 2011-2017. The overarching purpose of this support is to help build a quality education system that enables all children, everywhere to complete a full cycle of basic education at the correct age. To achieve this, understanding in-depth the context of the country and the barriers and bottlenecks preventing the most disadvantaged from accessing education as well as the strategies that will have the most impact on children is essential. UNICEF is in the process f designing its next country programme to run from 2018-2022.

UNICEF Myanmar's largest programme, QBEP ended on 30 June 2016. Building on QBEP, strategically utilising the QBEP balance of over 12 million USD is currently being implemented until June 2017. UNICEF's BEGE Programme has therefore been in a period of transition and revised its overarching Theory of Change (ToC) to reflect new realities and opportunities, including a significant change in implementation strategy to adopt a Whole State Approach (WSA) wherein UNICEF has provided a package of activities implemented through a range of national and subnational partners — e.g. MoE, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Department of Rural Development, State governments, etc.—in every township in the targeted state(s). The Current Theory of Change (2015-2017) for the BEGE programme is presented graphically on the next page.

In 2016, UNICEF aimed to consolidate achievements to date and capitalise on ongoing political and education sector reforms centralising finalisation and launch of the NESP as the key to provision of equitable and inclusive education for each child in Myanmar, realising their opportunity to reach their full educational potential throughout their basic education. This key is the anchor to all action under QBEP and Building on QBEP, as well as for the BEGE programme and informs all aspects of the new Education component of the Country Programme Document 2018-2022.

The education facet of the new Country Programme aims to contribute to the Government's efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 for Education and successfully implement the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) 2016-2021. The programme will align with the NESP, focusing on the realization of equity and inclusion in basic education and the improvement of students' learning. This will be achieved through evidence-based policy advocacy, system strengthening, communications for development and inclusive partnerships at national and sub-national levels and maximizing synergies with child protection, social policy and child rights monitoring, health, nutrition and communications teams within MCO. The main government and other partners include: Ministry of Education, including State and Region Education Offices; National Education Policy Commission; Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Planning and Finance; Ministry of Ethnic Affairs; International development partners of the education coordination group, including UN agencies, donors, multilateral organisations, international and national NGOs and CSOs, Non-State Education Departments, as well as academic institutions.

The vision for the next country programme is that: all children in Myanmar acquire skills and knowledge and thereby will be better equipped to manage their own lives and contribute to the wellbeing of their families, communities and a peaceful, and economically prosperous society. The related, proposed MCO outcome Statement is that: By 2022, children, especially the most disadvantaged, will acquire knowledge and skills in an inclusive, safe, quality learning environment to complete pre-primary, primary, transition to secondary and complete lower secondary education.

This work of the new Country Programme for Education will be executed through three main outputs:

Output 1: MoE and other partners at national and sub-national levels have increased capacity to give a head start to children aged 3-5 years though quality preschool and Kindergarten (KG) education. ¹⁵

Output 2: Parents, teachers, communities, MoE and other partners have increased capacity to actively support inclusive quality education to keep girls and boys (especially the most marginalised) in school, helping them transition and complete quality and inclusive primary and lower secondary education and thereby contribute to social inclusion and cohesion.¹⁶

Output 3: MoE at national and sub-national levels have increased capacity to provide out-of-school children aged 10-18 with *quality-assured*, *certified and nationally accredited alternative education* at primary and lower secondary levels, and continuous learning for children in emergencies, in collaboration with key partners.¹⁷

By an iterative process of prioritization, and through consultation with partners within the education and related sectors, UNICEF Myanmar has concluded it can best contribute to the development of quality, inclusive, equitable education in Myanmar by building directly on its work in basic education and by simultaneously providing technical expertise to advancement of other partner's work in upper secondary and TVET education. All work will be carried out in alignment with the NESP, in support of the GoM vision for Education, and in collaboration with relevant partners of the sector and those related to its goals. Key areas which present opportunities for UNICEF to complement the work of other partners include: alternative education and forging multiple pathways between complementary systems; sub-national planning and coordination; convening government, development partners and civil society; primary education assessment; and cross-sectoral issues relating to inclusion and rights, such as gender, disability, out of school children, DRR, social cohesion, child health, child protection, and WASH. These issues in particular will be strategized and actioned with the teams of UNICEF Myanmar in order to mobilize cross-sectoral analysis, planning and action.

¹⁵ NESP Strategies 4: 1: Strengthening governance and coordination in pre-school services; 4.2: Expand access to pre-school services in rural and remote areas; 4.3 Improve pre-school quality to better prepare children for primary school.

¹⁶ NESP Chapter 5: Basic education reforms: Strategy 5.1: Strengthening policy, legislation and systems; 5.2 Strengthening partnerships; 5.3: Advocacy and communication; Chapter 6: Basic education Access Quality and inclusion, strategies 6.2: Support compulsory and inclusive education; 6.3: Improve school quality through a national school-based quality assurance system; Chapter 8: Student Assessment and Exams Strategy 1: Improve assessment and examinations; Ch. 8 Teacher Education and management.

¹⁷ Aligned with NESP Chapters on Basic Education, Access, Quality, and Inclusion, Student Assessment and National Examinations, Teacher Education and Management

Table 6. Planned budget and available resources for 2017 (in US dollar)

2017 Planned Budget					
Immediate Result	Funding Type	Planned Budget	Funded Budget	Shortfall	
05-07 ECCD	RR*	221,719	111,847	109,871	
03-07 ECCD	ORR	765,081	6,396,670	(5,631,589)	
	RR	399,094	149,203	249,890	
05-08 Basic Ed	ORR	3,528,748	1,211,308	2,317,441	
	ORE	253,000	252,699	301	
OF OO Seaton Devicements	RR	133,031	157,342	(24,311)	
05-09 Sector Performance	ORR	172,526	1,221,765	(1,049,239)	
	RR	133,031		133,031	
05-10 Humanitarian- Peacebuilding	ORR	119,265	1,350,320	(1,231,055)	
eacebanang	ORE	3,477,000	6,049,670	(2,572,670)	
05-11 Education – Leadership and Technical Assistance	RR	535,597	1,510,079	(974,482)	
	ORR	2,389,380	810,337	1,579,043	
	ORE	700,000	660,434	39,566	
Sub-total Regular Resources	RR	1,422,472	1,928,471	(506,000)	
Sub-total Other Resources- Regular	ORR	6,975,000	10,990,399	(4,015,399)	
Sub-total OR Emergency	ORE	4,430,000	6,962,803	(2,533,104)	
Total (RR+OR+ORE)		12,827,472	19,881,673	(7,054,202)	

5. Expression of Thanks

UNICEF Myanmar would like to offer sincere thanks to the Governments, National Committees, NGOs and other UN agencies and corporate donors whose collaborations were instrumental in achieving results for quality education in Myanmar in 2016. UNICEF Myanmar is particularly grateful to the Korean National Committee for UNICEF and the Netherlands National Committee for their specific contribution to UNICEF Myanmar for the education programme work. UNICEF Myanmar is also thankful to the governments of Australia, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, and the United Kingdom as well as the European Union, who have also contributed funds to education programmes in Myanmar through partnerships. As a result of your critical support more children in Myanmar, and in particular more girls and boys from disadvantaged groups and living in conflict situations, have been able to fulfil their potential for a brighter future.

Increased number and proportion of children accessing and completing quality basic education in targeted townships.



Supporting Systems Change

Output 1: ECCD

Equitable policies and supporting systems in place, with increased provision of quality, inclusive ECCD services.

Output 2:

Primary/Secondary/Alternative Delivery

Enhanced coverage, quality, relevance, and inclusivity of child friendly teaching and learning environments in primary and secondary schools, including the provision of quality alternative education.

Output 3: Sector Performance

Enhanced education sector performance, including improved planning, management, monitoring and evaluation capacity of key education actors at all levels.

Output 4:

Humanitarian (EiE/PBE/DRR)

Enhanced emergency preparedness and response, including improved EiE sector coordination as well as conflict-sensitive, locally responsive, and socially cohesive policies and programs.

Outputs 2015-17

IR 1: Enabling Environment improved through sustained advocacy, coordination, and technical assistance to ensure full stakeholder engagement in the NESP – and equitable and inclusive attainment of all children's educational rights through education reform.

IR 2: Quality supply increased through betterquality teaching methodologies and learning environments, as well as through improved planning, management, monitoring and evaluation and mentoring capacity of key education actors at all levels. IR 3: Demand improved through enhanced knowledge, behavior, and participation from students, families, and communities for inclusive, quality, and context responsive education.

Cross-cutting priorities for

Gender Equity

Disability

Social Cohesion

Ethnicity/ Lang

DRR

Legislation

Budget/ Expenditure Coordination/ Management Norms/ Practices Financial Access

Continuity/ Sustainability Min. Quality Standards Adequate Staffing Essential Inputs

Whole State Approach

Intermediate Results

Knowledge & Evidencebased Advocacy

Academia MoE DPs, NGOs Media Parliament

Partnerships MoE State Govt. DPs NGOs NSAs

Local Planning State Govt. State Edu. NGOs NSAs School Staff

Capacity Dev for Gov to Deliver Services State Govt. NGOs NSAs

School

Staff

Cross-Sectoral Links Child Protection WASH Peacebuilding Adolescence

What would make a difference?



Education System Does Not Effectively Support Children to Reach Their Potential

Ltd. Investment | Low Capacity | Weak | Poor Classroom | Low Quality | Poor Curricula, | Community | Gaps in Policies |
Governance | Environment | Teaching | Assessments | Disempowerment | Gaps in Policies

Annex 1: Human Interest Story

The time is right - perspectives on language dialogue from Kachin

By Deirdre Naughton, Education Communications

Daw L Ja Aung Lu teaches grade one pupils in Mogaung Township, Kachin State. Her day begins even before the pupils make their way through the school gate and into their classrooms. She reviews her planning notes, reminding herself of her teaching content for the day, and mentally revises the language she will use with her diverse group of pupils.



Daw L Ja Aung Lu (left) with some of her fellow teachers ©UNICEF Myanmar/ Deirdre Naughton/2016

Daw Lu starts each lesson in Myanmar language, then explains a second time in Chin Po, the mother-tongue of 50 per cent of her pupils, enabling all the children in her class to understand, and progress their learning together. She has been a head teacher in Mogaung Township, Kachin State, for four years, and was appointed after only one year of teaching and performs the dual role of class and head teacher. She has 85 pupils in her school, with ethnic Chin Pho making up 50 per cent, Sawa 30 per cent and the remaining pupils being Shan, Lowo and Hindu. She speaks Myanmar but also tries her utmost to understand the ethnic languages of the pupils in her care. She notes that parents know that their children will find it easier to learn if their mother-tongue language is used. Parents are very supportive of her language approach - using supplementary instruction and facilitating the children's understanding through Chin Pho. "It's simple, children don't want to attend school if they can't understand."

Daw Lu is showing in practice what educational research confirms - that children learn better, faster and more easily in their first language. Language learning research shows that children learn better when they understand the language of instruction — especially in the early grades. Research shows that children also learn additional languages more easily if they are literate in their own language first. Lessons learned from the ASEAN region (including Cambodia, Thailand, and Philippines), show that Mother Tongue Based-Multi Lingual Education (MTB-MLE) is one of the most appropriate approaches to solve the learning outcome difficulties occurred by language barriers for ethnic children.

For Daw L Ja Aung Lu, the first lesson on a concept can be taught in Myanmar, but should be followed by an explanation in Chin Po. However, not all teachers in the school necessarily speak Chin Pho, so they can't teach in this language. Therefore, after children transition from Daw L Ja Aung Lu's class into the next class, where Chin Pho is not used by the teachers, "there are more absences after this transition. The understanding is not there and they do not want to attend," says Daw Lu.

According to Daw Lu, a Language Policy will make things change, "If there is a policy in place, even at the youngest level, especially at the kindergarten level, we will be able to explain and use the children's own language – the language they learnt at home, so that in school, teaching will be more effective and useful for children's learning."

Daw Lu believes that there are critical next steps that can be taken to support the process of language policy development. "The education department of Kachin State needs to give official recognition to the State language policy. In relation to children's right to education, it is often high decision making people who are involved, but it is vital to involve teachers and head teachers for their perspective from the ground and to gain practical insights."

Daw Lu has attended Language Dialogue workshops supported by UNICEF in Kachin State twice. In the past she didn't understand clearly the link between peace, social cohesion and education. Through the dialogues and workshops, she understands now the critical importance of mother-tongue-based multi-lingual education (MTB-MLE). "If the language policy reflects the reality of communications in schools, it will be a strong policy and this will contribute to peace and unity. Without a strong policy at State level, we cannot build a successful policy at national level," she states. Daw Lu believes that a national language policy can only be successfully developed on the foundation of regional and state level policies.



U Hkaing Lim, Deputy Speaker of Parliament in Kachin ©UNICEF Myanmar/ Deirdre Naughton/2016

UNICEF has facilitated dialogues to help in preparing language policies in Kachin and Mon states, supported by the three year Peacebuilding through Education and Advocacy Programme (funded by the Government of the Netherlands and UNICEF).

U Hkaing Lim, the Deputy Speaker of Parliament in Kachin State, has also been involved in language policy dialogue and believes in the importance of mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) for all children, especially now. "In Myanmar, we have 135 ethnic language groups and for many decades all language and literacy has been ignored. We cannot allow them to disappear. This is my first time involved because I feel the time is right for us to work together on this language issue."

UNICEF calls on the Government of Myanmar to join with all parties to develop a conflict-sensitive, multi lingual education policy that meets the needs of various ethnic groups, and to gather more data (Language Mapping) on children who speak other languages at home – and on their performance in school.

Donor feedback form

UNICEF is working to improve the quality of our reports and would highly appreciate your feedback. Kindly answer the questions below in relation to this report and return to Penelope Campbell (pcampbell@unicef.org) who will share your input with relevant colleagues in the country office and at headquarters. Thank you.

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have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what could we do better ime?
To what extent does the report meet your expectations with regard to reporting on results?
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have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what we missed or what we do better next time?
Please provide us with your suggestions on how this report could be improved to meet your expectations.
Are there any other comments that you would like to share with us?