



Yadana Man Aung Monastic Education School, Monywe village, Myanmar/Burma

Fact Sheet

For more than five decades, Burma has been entrenched in political and armed conflict between the repressive ruling military regime, political opponents, and ethnic groups, resulting in the displacement of over 3.5 million Burmese. While most analysts ... believe only a change in political leadership can address the structural causes of poverty in Burma, few forecast an end to the country's political stalemate ... The international community must do more to address the humanitarian needs of Burma's 55 million people in the absence of political progress.

Current Humanitarian Situation

Although Burma is a resource-rich country with a strong agricultural base, it is believed to be one of the poorest countries in the world. The UN Development Program estimates that Burma's GDP per capita is the 13th lowest in the world. According to UNICEF under-5 child mortality averages 104 per 1,000 children, the second-highest rate outside Africa, after Afghanistan. Burma also has the highest HIV rates in Southeast Asia, and malaria, a treatable and preventable



disease, is still the leading cause of mortality and morbidity.

Despite this, Burma receives less international assistance – at \$3 per person – than any other of the poorest nations in the world, where the average is \$58 per person. *For the full report and other reports, please visit Refugees International*

BODHI in Burma

BODHI has long wanted to work in Burma but has needed an entree. In 2007, Colin met Burmese orthopaedic surgeon Dr Kotar Mg at the International Network of Engaged Buddhists Conference in Taiwan. Dr Mg stopped doing surgery because conditions were so bad he couldn't practice. Three years ago, he started the



Yadana Man Aung Monastic Education School, which is located at Monywa village in Monywa district, Sagaing division, Myanmar. Monywa village has about 850 households. Yadana Man Aung provides education to very poor children who cannot attend the public school.

In 2008, the school had 100 students, aged 10-12. The number in 2009 will be about 130. The maximum will be 150. People involved with Yadana Man Aung are 6 voluntary teachers and a Buddhist monk. There is no



discrimination by race, religion or gender.

‘Education means 3 Rs & life skills,’ Dr Mg says. ‘We use RWCT (Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking) as our teaching method. After 5 years’ primary education, the students cannot continue schooling and have to leave. They have to work in the fields.’





BODHI's donation provides materials to teach literacy and life skills to 100 students over the project's 5-year duration. Dr Mg contributes support for teachers and classroom furniture.

Dr Kotar Mg

Dr Mg explains why he quit his career as an orthopaedic surgeon: 'We had not even simple instruments so we couldn't do very much,' he says. 'After twenty years in the profession, even while working as a consultant surgeon, I started writing. I enjoy it. My first book has been well accepted.'

'Firstly I wrote what I wanted to write. Now I've changed a little bit and write what I deem important to transform our society.'

'I am running three schools,' Dr Mg adds. 'Yadana Manaung serves the grassroots. The other two serve middle income professionals.'



