As founders, we very often get asked by donors and friends about our own preference when it comes to allocating funds to needy causes. For me personally, this is a rather easy and pragmatic question since I’m focused on long-term sustainability and improvement. After all, our own lives are meant to trigger positive change and we don’t have unlimited time at hand to achieve this. Hence, my lottery win would preferably go towards creating a powerful group of responsible leaders and specialists. The reason for this is very simple: if we succeed in educating and nurturing positive change makers, then half the job is done. This group of young and promising individuals will help us to trigger positive change from the disadvantaged in society by becoming educators, law makers, health professionals and journalists; in short, they become the generation who challenges the current situation. And the current situation in our four countries needs to change in order to bring these societies forward and make them more just and fair. When Daniel and I started Child’s Dream more than 16 years ago, we agreed that our organisation should only be a ‘temporary’ intervention with the goal of achieving positive change for our beneficiaries. Even if ‘temporary’ in our case means 30 or 40 years, it has to be our long-term goal to have solved problems in our countries so that our efforts pay off, once and for all. OK, we have realised in the meantime that the problems at hand are slightly bigger than initially estimated; nevertheless, even after only 16 years of work, we see tremendous positive change. So many lives were improved, inequality reduced, chances enhanced, hence successes celebrated. This keeps us going and strengthens our belief that creating responsible leaders and specialists remains of utmost importance, even if it’s sometimes an uphill battle to find funding for our students. Don’t misunderstand us; all our interventions are important! That’s why we still run programmes ranging from granting...
Child’s Dream supports a large school health programme in Bago city in Myanmar. Bago is home to many monastic schools which accept thousands of students from poor families in order to give these children an opportunity for education. We work together with a group of local doctors and nurses who provide health awareness education, as well as health screening to over 5,000 students in 17 monastic schools. This programme costs roughly USD 9 per year per student, but includes two health screenings and weekly health awareness education.

During the health screening, we found that almost 60% of the students suffer from dental problems. In response, all students in all 17 schools are now required to brush their teeth after lunch to prevent further dental problems. Most students have never
used a toothbrush before. However, to address the already existing dental problems, we decided to bring the students, together with their parents, to various dentists. In the first round, we brought 500 students and 150 students needed tooth extraction and some needed tooth reconstruction. A tooth extraction for a child under 12 years costs less than USD 2. We agreed with the parents that we would share these costs. During the waiting period at the dentist, our doctors and nurses also promoted oral hygiene to both students and parents. I am sure that the experience at the dentist will be the best prevention!

Making Education More Relevant and More Interesting

For our Basic Education team, the first priority has always been making sure that all children have access to schooling. Over the last 15 years we have seen school enrolment rates soaring as schooling has become more accessible and also more affordable. The new challenge is now how to keep the students in school and to improve their learning. Besides economic factors, the main reasons for students to drop out of school is because they feel that school is boring and they do not learn anything useful.

The problem lies with the educators who are still stuck in the last century. Our teams tackle this issue in different ways. In Cambodia, we train young and motivated teachers at six high schools with our career planning curriculum. This comprehensive curriculum is very interactive and prepares the students for their life after high school. In Laos, we expanded our teacher training to our two provinces in the south of the country. We help our principals and senior teachers to create a school development plan and mentor their progress over three years. In Thailand, which seems to have the most change-resistant education system of all of our countries, we plan to change one school at the time through our active teaching programme. In the past we worked with motivated teachers from various schools only, but whenever they returned to their schools, they were discouraged from applying their new techniques. Now we work with whole schools with all teachers and the principals participating in our training. The pilot with two schools was very successful and we therefore plan to expand to more schools. In Myanmar, we partner with various groups, including Mote Oo, Rural Indigenous Sustainable Education (RISE) and Bop Htaw Education Empowerment Program to provide teacher preparation courses and teacher capacity building on various levels.

For our Basic Education team, upgrading teachers in our countries to be able to deliver more relevant and higher quality education will be one of their main challenges over the next few years.
This year’s Alumni Activities Programme (AAP) conference for our alumni and final year students from the Laos University Scholarship Programme took place in Vientiane, Laos, from 13-15 September. Overall, the agenda progressed well and we are happy to see that our alumni now have better awareness of development issues and understanding of organisations working towards the development of Laos.

During the first day of the event, we had a variety of guest speakers and panels discussing active learning, modern teaching techniques, classroom management, community needs, corporate social responsibility, proposal writing, and our own Social Entrepreneurship Grants.

On the second day, we had morning sessions on lifelong education and the importance of volunteering, followed by afternoon visits to five organisations around Vientiane. The evening ended with a fun talent show competition over dinner!

Finally, on the third day, we had a presentation on making a purpose-driven career, a panel discussion on job opportunities, and group presentations from alumni about their organisation visits and community projects.
Mi Lyah Wondi (Wah Wah Tun) is 25 years old and graduated from the Wide Horizon Program in 2017. She is Mon and come from Taung Pa Lu Village, Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State. She was Training Coordinator and Project Manager at Mon Women’s Organization (MWO). Now, she is working at Wide Horizons Organization (WH), our local partner organisation in Myanmar, as Work Placement and Alumni Coordinator in Mawlamyine, Mon State. We interviewed with her about her experiences during at the WH Program and the changes in her life.

**What are your responsibilities at your organization?**

My position is WH Work Placement and Alumni Coordinator. My responsibilities are mostly dealing with work placement students, such as collecting their quarterly reports and supervisor evaluations. After that, I have to provide feedback for them and write summary reports to share with other staff members.

**When did you join WH Program?**

I joined WH Program in the 2015-16 academic year.

**Do you like the WH Program? Why?**

Yes, I like WH Program because it taught me how to deal with different situations and challenges. I gained self-confidence, leadership skills and team building skills from the WH Program.

**What did you learn from the WH Program?**

I learned English skills, computer skills, including website and blog building, and community development knowledge, plus other skills such as video editing, reproductive health and cross cultural training.

**Do you think those skills are important for you? Why?**

Yes, those skills are really important for me because I love to work with communities, so I really need these skills to work effectively.

**How do you apply the skills those you gained from WH Program?**

Mostly, I applied them at Mon Women’s Organization, where I worked for almost 6 years. I wrote reports to donors, designed the newsletter, journals and pamphlets. I also used facilitation skills to work with the community, and team building skills to work with the team and dealing with challenges. Now, I am so glad to apply my skills and knowledge in our WH school.
What was your main challenge while you were studying at WH Program?

Firstly, my biggest challenge was English skills because, before I attend WH program, I just learnt Basic English. Other students had already finished Pre-Intermediate or Intermediate level, so it was really difficult for me. At first, I didn’t dare to speak in a discussion or presentation, but the next trimester I had to try. Also, I didn’t have self-confidence. Sometimes, I knew the answer, but I didn’t dare to speak out in front of others because I was worried that I would make a mistake. And then, Teacher Jordan always reminded me, “Wah! You can do it, I know”. After that, I tried and did it! In the end, I wasn’t afraid to make a mistake.

How different were you before and after you attended WH Program?

I would like to tell of two changes in my life. The first is the skills part. Before I attended the WH Program, even I didn’t know how to speak English and write emails. To attend this program, one of my sisters had to write emails for me. After, I knew how to speak and write English, such as report writing and professional email writing, and how to use computers such as designing newsletters and journals. The second thing is knowledge. Before, I was really afraid to make mistakes, so sometimes, the teachers told me, “Good mistake”. Now, I am not afraid. If I make some mistake, I know how to apply this mistake to be better and I learn from my mistakes.

What are your future plans?

I have three future plans. Firstly, I would like to apply my knowledge and skills so the WH Program is sustainable and helps young adults to get accepted in programs which offer that English, Computers and Community Development. Secondly, I would like to help my community by opening a summer course in basic computer skills, English and other knowledge and skills. Finally, I would like to study abroad because I want to get university experience to work in my community.

What suggestion would you like to give for new WH academic students?

I know that some students lack confidence and so need self-confidence skills training like I had. I would say that if you don’t learn and practise, you will never have confidence. To increase self-confidence, you must learn and practise regularly.

What is your message to WH academic students?

My message to WH students is it does not matter if you are not super-intelligent, but it does matter to have perseverance. As for me, my brain works slowly and I have to double check to understand what is meant. I have to spend more time than others do. Even so, I did not stop learning and waste my time without reason. Therefore, if you are a bit less intelligent, you should blame yourself. You have to give yourself more time to learn and never stop half way to your goal.

Child’s Dream Responds to Myanmar Floods

Thank you, Mehm Kan Kyi and all the volunteers who selflessly gave their time, energy, and skills in distributing relief supplies to flood affected areas of Mon State in Myanmar. Your commitment to serve others is greatly appreciated. We couldn’t do it without you!
Our Yearbook 2018 Is out Now!

A million thanks to The Press Room for putting together the contents and design of this awesome yearbook! Enjoy! PDF | Flipbook view (only in English)

Fundraising in Zurich

A huge thank you to the youngsters who’ve worked tirelessly and endured the heat of Zurich summer to raise funds for Child’s Dream. Sometimes, little things make a big difference! We cannot thank you enough for your support! Kudos to everyone who helped!

Top-Rated Awards of 2019!

We have been honoured with one of the first Top-Rated Awards of 2019 from GreatNonprofits for the fifth consecutive year! We appreciate all of your contributions! https://greatnonprofits.org/org/childs-dream-foundation

Child's Dream Foundation

Congratulations

Your community has selected your organization as one of the 2019 Top-Rated Nonprofits using GreatNonprofits. You are among a distinguished few to receive this community endorsement.

Perla Ni
CEO GreatNonprofits
CD Annual Workshop 2019
That’s a wrap on our annual workshop! Thank you to our guest trainer, Daniel Ng, for providing us with excellent Communication Training! We’re very grateful for an interesting and fun learning experience! We also discussed our impact and held refresher training on Child Rights. And, of course, our CD stars shone brightly with their super awesome performances on Child’s Dream’s Got Talent! Can’t wait until the next workshop!