Karen Education Department (KED)
Promoting Quality Higher Education across Karen State, Myanmar
The Situation

After the implementation of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) in 2015 between Myanmar government and the representatives of insurgent ethnic groups, Karen State has since experienced decrease in armed conflicts, but improvements in terms of national dialogue and access to education.

Funding and international focus has shifted away from the refugee camps along the border towards building a better Myanmar from within; improving access to higher education opportunities inside Myanmar will be a crucial task. Consequently, the necessity of the refugee camps will decrease in the near future, and refugees are encouraged to return to Myanmar. For a while already, the camp populations and their education institutions are developing a transition plan for a post-camp scenario, meaning repatriation to Myanmar for a majority of the current refugees.

As part of our 5-year transition scheme, Academic Year 2018 – 2019 was the final year of financial support for refugee camp schools, overseen by The Karen Refugee Committee – Education Entity (KRCEE). Going forward, the funding will be contributed to 5 partner schools in Karen State, Myanmar, under the Karen Education Department (KED).
Karen Education Department (KED) - Overview

KED, administered by Karen National Union (KNU), is a non-profit which oversees Higher Education activities and development in Karen State, Myanmar. The communities would have no access to education after high school without this programme, and therefore, would not be able to produce educated leaders capable of solving their society’s problems.

The organisation develops and implements an education system and resources which prioritise integrating Karen Language, history and ethnic identity into the Burmese-Language curriculum, so as to promote the right to mother tongue education. This system has been extensively adopted by over 1,000 schools, from primary to post-high school level, within Karen State of Myanmar and refugee camps along the Thai-Myanmar border. Ethnic education system can therefore be viewed as a catalyst towards a future federal Myanmar from the bottom up (OCHA, 2015).

Within Child’s Dream’s support of 5-year strategy, KED schools are encouraged to start income generation strategy to be able to sustainably support the school in their communities.
Objectives

❖ To support school operation and development at post-high school level to ensure inclusive access to quality education within Karen State

❖ To promote student-centred learning methods

❖ To prepare students for meaningful careers, where ideally, they can be critical future leaders who can contribute and move their community forward

❖ To address shortfall of qualified staff in the education sector through capacity building

❖ To provide a foundation for accredited university studies in the future.
How It Works

KED schools main activities include

- Arranging training for teachers on methodology and subject upgrading
- Harmonising curricula across all Karen State based schools
- Coordinating material distribution to schools
- Providing management and administration support including hiring new teachers
- Coordinating community-engagement activities for students to assist the local members in work such as farming and harvesting.

Education supplies and textbooks distributed to schools in Karen State for teachers and students
# How It Works

| KED Schools Main Events throughout the academic year |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| **April**       | Student registration                                                            |
| **May**         | Annual workshops/training/planning/strategy                                      |
| **June**        | Schools start. Curriculum may focus on Academic subjects such as English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Computer Skills and Languages: Burmese, Thai and Karen. Schools also offer Vocational training stream where students practically learn such as mechanical and electrical skills. |
| **August**      | Mid-Semester I examination                                                       |
| **October**     | End-Semester I examination                                                       |
| **November**    | First Semester examination; Policy and Curriculum Revision Workshop              |
| **January**     | Mid-Semester II examination                                                      |
| **March**       | End-Semester II examination / Final Exam                                         |
| **April**       | Graduation                                                                        |
Budget

The total amount of the programme’s overall running costs is **USD 220,000** for academic year 2019-2020 (June – May).

From 2019-2020 academic year, funding will no longer support schools in the refugee camps in Thailand.

**Monitoring & Reporting**

Payment is proceeded quarterly at reception of narrative and photo reports as well as monthly financial & activity reports. Feedback is also obtained directly during regular visits by our local team.

We report to donor(s) on a semester basis and visits can be arranged.