

PROJECT UPDATES

Myanmar Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (My-PEC)

Protect Children in Conflict and Disaster 2017

Aside from longstanding conflicts in some areas of the country, Myanmar regularly experiences heavy rainfall and floods and is prone to cyclones, earthquakes, landslides and drought. Most of the population live in rural areas which unfortunately tend to be affected by conflicts and natural disasters. Affected by either conflicts or disasters, families often lose their houses and incomes, and are pushed to vulnerability, leading children, girls and boys to child labour, in some cases the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

“Mostly, disasters and conflicts have destructive effects on a poor family’s life, and children tend to become child labourers. Some children become orphans, some families lose their homes and livelihood. These push factors children to do work that is harmful to their physical and mental development. Moreover, among the main causes of child labour is poverty, lack of education and health care, and little knowledge and awareness on this issue. Eliminating Child Labour is a big challenge for our country. We are working with the ILO to solve this issue

through the Technical Working Group on Child Labour (TWG-CL). We are developing a 3 phase National Action Plan (within 2018 - 2033) and also developing the hazardous work list. Therefore, I would like to encourage working together with workers, employers, UN agencies, INGOs/LNGOs, CSOs, relevant ministries of the government and representatives of self-administrative areas to eliminate the worst form of child labour in our country” stated U Thein Swe, Minister of Labour, Immigration and Population at the national event to celebrate World Day Against Child Labour.



Group photos of Technical Working Groups members of Child Labour in 9 June 2017 (WDACL National Event).

© ILO Photo / Lei Kay Khine

This year, Myanmar celebrated World Day Against Child Labour for the 4th time. Events were organized in different States and Regions (Yangon, Ayeyarwaddy, Bago, Mon and Shan) with the support of ILO MyPEC and in partnership with the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, as well as organizations such as Ratana Metta, Hope for Shinning Stars, Centre for Rural Education & Development, Mon-

National Education Committee and the Yin Thway Foundation.

More than 1600 people participated in the various national events that gathered Government officials, Parliamentarians, Ambassadors, as well as representatives of Workers, and Employers Organizations, UNs, INGOs/LNGOs, CSOs/CBOs, township and village authorities, parents, teachers, and most importantly children.

Teacher are the key persons to monitor child labour



Group photo after teacher training.

© ILO Photo / Hnin Wuit Yee

20 teachers from Dagon Seik Kan township received training on child labour issues, international labour standards, hazardous work and child labour monitoring system. The aim of the training was to increase their understanding on the issues, to establish the role teachers can play in tackling child labour, includ-

ing identifying children at risk of dropping out and children likely to fall into a situation of child labour. Discussions were held about building a better network and involving the community members.

Teachers are at the forefront in interacting with children, and are most likely aware of what children do outside school time. Given this prominent position, teachers can play a key role in raising awareness on the issue of child labour, and informing the parents on the risks working children are exposed to.

Part of teachers’ daily activities is to monitor children’s school attendance. They recognized that paying attention to high-risk

children is an important preventive measure against child labour.

Meeting with Ethnic Affairs Committee

The MyPEC project met with the Ethnic Affairs Committee of Upper House (Amyotha Hluttaw) on 8 March 2017 to raise awareness as well as to share data on child labour and discuss the development of the National Action Plan on child labour.



Development of National Action Plan on Child Labour in Myanmar



Panel Discussions: Lessons and good practice from Myanmar on livelihoods and decent work (including safe migration)

Photo taken by Lei Kay Khine

On 13-17 March 2017, FGLLID together with the TWG-CL and with support from MyPEC hosted a national consultation workshop in Nay Pyi Taw to develop the framework for the National Action Plan (NAP) on child labour. The workshop gathered close to 100 participants from Government departments, workers' and employers' organizations, Parliament, NGOs and CBOs, as well as international development partners and media.

In his opening remark, U Win Shein, Director General of Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population stressed "to eliminate child labour in our country, we have to focus on poverty reduction strategies, improving the education system, being better prepared for natural disasters, and work toward establishing good governance on

internal migration. In addition, more vocational training is needed to ensure access to better incomes particularly for poor families."

The NAP Workshop was the culmination of a consultation process initiated in September 2016. Participants have agreed on three consecutive 5-year plans until 2033 with the main overall goal of the NAP defined as:

By 2033 all boys and girls in Myanmar are effectively prevented and protected from child labour, especially in its worst forms.

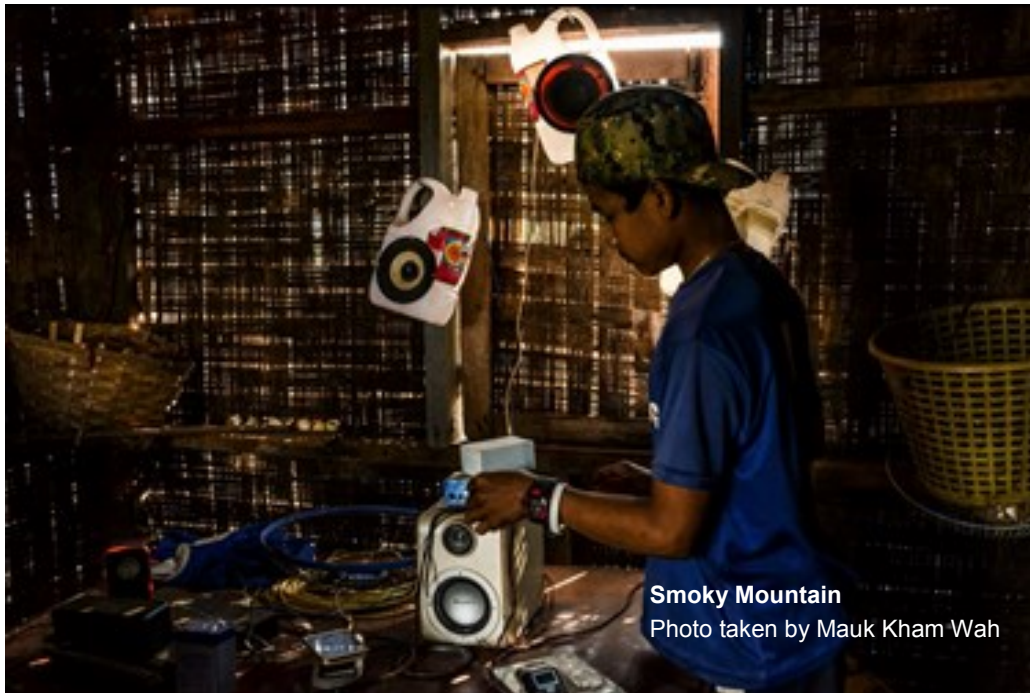
The draft National Action Plan is set to be finalized by December 2017.

Consultation workshop with youth representatives

The NAP consultation process involved multi-stakeholders from all regions and states and groups/sectors of Myanmar, and with this youth is recognized being important part of the process. 40 youth participants from youth networks across the country were invited to the discussion, and from their perspective identified different forms of child labour that need immediate attention, the root causes, key priorities and ways to address child labour in each state and region. Their inputs and participations provided valuable information and as such was incorporated fully into the discussion during a national consultation workshop.



YANGON PHOTO FESTIVAL 2017



Smoky Mountain
Photo taken by Mauk Kham Wah

In December 2016, MyPEC jointly with the YPF conducted a photojournalist workshop focusing on child labour. From 3rd March to 19th March 2017, the 9th Yangon Photo Festival (YPF) exhibition took place in the Mahlar Bandula Park in front of the City Hall one of the most frequented and colorful place in Yangon. On 12th March, MyPEC project participated at this Photo Festival as part of the Project's public awareness campaign on child labour issues.

In the event, MyPEC distributed child labour posters and pamphlets, and conducted a quiz on child labour with children, parents, and general public/audience. Some of the photos stories from this workshop were screened and were part of the photo competition during the festival. Over 60,000 visitors joined the main photo exhibitions, and photo-stories reached out to over 1.5 million people on Facebook. On 11 March, at the Institut Français de Birmanie, Myanmar photographers competed for the best photo-story award in front of 6 members of a jury presided by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. One of the photographers trained earlier in December 2016 by MyPEC namely, Mauk Kham Wah was awarded the second prize of emerging talent category with his child labour photo story called "Smoky Mountain"

Other key activities project focused on building networks and awareness raising with CBOs in Kachin State. A training was conducted in Myitkyina Township in February 2017. NAP priorities were also identified through this activity.

In March and April 2017, with the support of MyPEC, workers organizations, AFFM-IUF, MICS, CTUM, provided Occupational Safety and Health (OSH), Child Labour, international standards and national laws, hazardous work, labour rights and issues including wages, and environment issues awareness to young working children, their parents and community members in the pilot targeted wards and villages of Dagon Seik Kan, Labutta and Ye. In total there were 455 participants in these series.

Specific Activities in supporting Workers Organizations:

In January and February 2017, ILO supported AFFM-IUF in the trainings on International Labour Standards for their 138 members across the country and conducted event in Aunglan Township (Magway), Pyinoolwin (Mandalay) and Pathein (Ayeyarwady). This initiative led by AFFM-IUF was within the SDG Alliance 8.7 Global agenda.

Safe Work, Better Lives





Ward 168, Dagon Seik Kan Township Yangon



Myint Myint Maw is 14 years old and she is reading in the 9th Standard. She loves Physics and Chemistry, and hopes to become a doctor one day. Myint Myint have benefited from My-PEC, which provided support to her family and community so that young people could give up work and dedicate more time to their education. Myint Myint loves going to school, although some subjects are challenging for her. Whilst the issue of quality education remain to be solved in Myanmar, many children continued to fail exams when attending classes alone without extra tuition is proven to be insufficient for children to pass the exam with high scores. Although Myint Myint’s parents no longer allow their daughter to work as they want her to concentrate on her studies, they could not afford sending her to tuition classes. Not being able to pass an exam with high marks would likely result in her not being easily able to access higher education and pursue her dream of becoming a doctor. She fears that with less score, she would only be accepted to the Distant Education System at academic level. Myint Myint knows that without education, most children would end up working, and some might even end up in dangerous works. She would like to encourage other children “to continue their education in order to get away from heavy and dangerous work”.

Aung Naing Soe is 14 years old from Mon State. When he was 8 at 3rd standard, he dropped out of school and started to work to support his family. He works in a poultry farm where he earned 80,000 MMK per month. Aung Naing Soe really wanted to go back to school, and it was only when My-PEC started a Non-formal Education (NFE) programme that he could stop working and join classes again. Aung Naing Soe is currently attending the NFE, where he learns English and Mon language. The NFE programme is specifically designed for young people like Aung Naing Soe who, after the morning classes, works with their families in small fishing business. Aung Naing Soe normally helps his mother in the fish and shrimp size sorting, and sometimes joins his father in his small catching boat. Aung’s dream is to learn how to fix motorcycles and improve his English to get a better job when he grows up.

Indin Ywar Thit Village, Ye Township, Mon



Chan Thar Kone Village, Labutta Township, Ayeyarwaddy



Saw Eh Pler Say is 14 years old and he dropped out of school after the 2nd Standard. He has 7 siblings and he is the third born in his family. His father left the house when Saw Eh’s mother was pregnant with his youngest sister. Given the situation, Saw Eh had to leave school and work to support his family. But now, through My-PEC, Saw Eh is attending the NFE at night, while during the day he works with his mother in a farm, cooking and grazing cattle, from Monday to Saturday. His monthly pay is 15,000 MMK and a bag of rice. He feels as the eldest son it is in his responsibility to work and generate income to support his family. Saw Eh gets up at 6 o’clock to go work and comes back home at 4 o’clock, just before getting ready for school.



The Myanmar Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (My-PEC) is an ILO four-year project that aims to develop a comprehensive, inclusive and efficient multi-stakeholder response to reduce child labour in Myanmar. The information contained in this newsletter reflect only some of the activities and outputs that the project has delivered since its official start. For more information please send an email to Selim Benaissa through yangon@ilo.org or call +95 1-2336538 .

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