



SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STREET KIDS

Appeal - 2026



Providing educational opportunities for very poor children in Myanmar since 2009

S4SK is a registered charity in the UK, No: 1131559
www.s4sk.org.uk, e-mail: info.s4sk@gmail.com

Who we are:

In the UK, we are Scholarships for Street Kids (S4SK)

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S4SK trustees are:



Sheila Kaye (Trustee), Anna Young (Secretary), Erica Cadbury (Treasurer), George Penaluna (Trustee), John McConnell (Managing Trustee), Michael Slingsby MBE (Patron) and Esther McConnell (Trustee)

In Myanmar, we work together with the Phoenix Academy for Learning and Motivation (PALM)

PALM
306-B Golden Parami Condominium,
Parami Road, Hlaing Township,
Yangon, Myanmar



S4SK, H4SS and PALM, a brief history: We opened our first class for out-of-school children, and awarded our first scholarships in 2007 on the initiative of John McConnell, a British Quaker, who was teaching conflict resolution skills with local NGOs in Yangon at the time. Scholarships for Street Kids (S4SK) was established as a UK charity in 2009 (Reg. No: 1131559). By 2013 there was a strong local team, and we formed a local NGO in Myanmar which, in 2016, registered as Hope for Shining Stars (H4SS), (Reg. No: 1/Local/0172).

Myanmar has been in crisis since the military takeover in early 2021, a situation that has been difficult for NGOs to navigate. In March 2023, so as to be able to operate more safely, the Governing Board of H4SS decided to re-register as the Phoenix Academy for Learning and Motivation (PALM), a non-profit academy dedicated to provision of education to children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

New areas of work include more capacity-building courses for teachers, expansion of provision of online learning, and new online classes in Chin State.

The trustees of S4SK all have connections with Keighley Quaker Meeting in West Yorkshire, while PALM directors and staff have included Buddhist, Christian, and Muslim faiths. We provide the same opportunities to children of all ethnic and religious backgrounds. Over 50% of our students are girls.

Together, S4SK and PALM work to bring real change to the lives of severely deprived children.



Senior staff and some teachers (left),
and the family of one of our NFE students in front of their home (right)

The children we support: Most of the children we help are **out-of-school**, and work long hours each day to support their families from as young as **eight or nine**. They make bricks, peel beans, fish, scavenge for recyclables, carry loads on building sites, herd cattle, pick watercress, tap rubber, hawk wares in markets, and more. **Many of their families have been illiterate for generations and cannot afford the loss of income incurred by children attending school full-time.** Children thus become **trapped in poverty**, unable to access education at the time in their lives when they need to be in school.



For more about working children, you can see the story of a young brick-maker in one of the videos on the homepage of our website. The work of S4SK and PALM enables child labourers to access education, vocational training, and so lead better lives.



Our strategy to enable working children to improve their life chances: Provision of education alone is not enough; since these children are often the breadwinners, we need to care for their families too. **Over the past 19 years, through engaging with families' problems as they arose, we have developed a strategy which gives out-of-school children access to education.**

1. Accessible education: The first step is the provision of education in a way that does not depend on previous schooling. This is important as many of our students have never been enrolled in school. Our teachers use a **child-centred, active-learning approach**, with games, quizzes and projects. Classes are fun, and the children are keen to learn. Our **non-formal education (NFE)** classes act as supplementary education classes would in the UK, bringing illiterate and out-of-school children to the approximate level of first or second year in secondary school.

Most of our NFE classes start from scratch. Usually the process begins with an approach from a concerned individual or NGO worker worried about the plight of children on the street in a particular locality. Our staff will then visit the area and set up a meeting with community leaders and parents who will help research the need in the locality. We ask them to join us in establishing a class and set up a local Non-formal Education and Child Protection Committee (NFEPC) to oversee the class.

These local NFEPCs are invaluable in helping us keep in touch with the community, finding and adapting class venues, and identifying educated people locally who could be trained as teachers.

Recently, we have begun partnering with local community-based organisations which are already engaged in social work, and want to address the problem of out-of-school children in their area.



Metta Garden NFE class: Our Metta Garden NFE class was established last year in a poor area of Hlaingtaya, in Yangon. The word 'metta' means 'loving-kindness' so often appears in the names of philanthropic ventures. During an NGO outreach event, we were requested by volunteers of the Future Star (FS) community organisation to set up a class for the many working children in the area. FS identified Daw Tapyay, who was already offering free English classes, as a possible teacher. Daw Tapyay joined our teacher training course, and the class started on 1st June 2025 with 22 students. All were out of school, with jobs including: scavenging, begging, hawking snacks on the street, harvesting and selling water spinach, and reselling discarded fruit from a local market.

Daw Tapyay writes:

"I am very satisfied. Not only am I able to contribute to my community, but this is also work that I truly enjoy. I can give as much support as my heart allows. **In other schools, if a child becomes sick, they might simply be sent home or handed over to their family. Here, if a child is unwell, I visit their home, encourage them to visit free clinics, and if transportation costs are a challenge, I know PALM will help.** I am like a bridge between PALM and the children. I do everything I can to help them. My NFE students are completely different from the children who are still wandering around outside. They have become much more aware and responsible. Their mindsets have changed. In the past, when asked what they wanted to do in the future, they would answer that they wanted to sell goods, work in construction, or collect recyclables. Now they say they want to attend the Learning Centre, learn computer skills, and they are able to make decisions about what they want to do in life."

2. Emergency support: Most of our pupils are the breadwinners for their families, so time in class means a lowering of family income. During the current civil war, with prices of essentials fluctuating wildly, we have been providing food and hygiene hampers, rather than cash payments as before. This helps ensure that families have what they need to look after their children.

Delivery of support is used as an occasion to engage with parents, educate them on child development, nutrition, hygiene and family budgeting, and listen to their problems. Like the NFE classes, these sessions are active, with games, quizzes and prizes. Parents look forward to them.



Distribution of food and hygiene support to families and a parent education session

Metta Garden class parents' reflections:

"We are happy. If children stay around the neighborhood, they can easily go astray. **We are much happier now that they are attending school.**"

"Before, we could not control our child. Since attending this class, things have improved. **She has learned to read and write. Everything is much better now. As parents, we feel very proud.**"

"We are happy because our children will become educated."

"Our children used to sleep and eat on the streets. We are so pleased that they can now study in this class. **They attend class regularly and willingly go to school.**"

"We are truly grateful for what is being done. We admire this work. **Education will create pathways for children's future development and success.**"



"Because of the political situation and military conscription concerns, we had to leave our hometown. **The children were out of school for nearly two years. Then we found PALM, and they accepted our children to study. We are deeply grateful.**"

"The teachers taught us how parents and children should relate to one another and how to discipline children appropriately. After meeting the teachers, **we no longer use physical punishment.**"

Parents also enthusiastically shared that they hope to establish a savings and loan group. They have already started saving money and expressed great happiness and pride in this achievement.

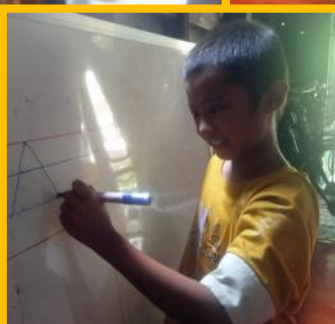
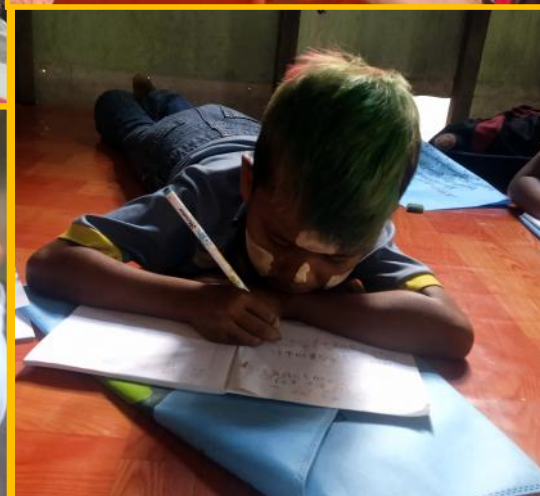
Metta Yin Gwin NFE class: The Metta Yin Gwin class is in North Dagon, in Yangon. The children come from families who migrated from other parts of the country. Most make a living by scavenging recyclable materials from rubbish dumps.

A survey of the community indicated that there were sufficient children to justify a class, and an existing NFE teacher was reallocated to teach there. A local woman, Daw Zin Mar, generously offered her home as a venue for the classes. During interviews, families shared stories of hardship and struggle. In conclusion, 15 children were enrolled.

Daw Zin Mar writes: "When I was young, my family also faced financial difficulties. I wanted to continue my education, but I never had the opportunity. That is why I want the children in my neighbourhood to have the chance to learn. **I feel proud and happy to help create opportunity for children in our community.** I want them to become educated. Nowadays, if you do not have wealth, education is even more important. **I want these children to receive the education that I missed. That is my motivation for helping them.** When the class first opened, the children often argued, fought, wrestled, and used bad language. It was difficult to manage them. After



Page 10: enrolment and orientation meeting, Page 11: scavenging for plastic, metal and glass. Below: NFE class activities



two months, however, they stopped fighting and stopped swearing."

Comments from the children:

"We enjoy studying here."

"When I attended regular school, other children looked down on us, and would not let us join their games. I often had to stay by myself and felt discriminated against. Even when I reported it to the teacher, nothing was done. Here everyone treats me well. I want to continue studying here."

"I tell my friends at the rubbish dump that I go to school now."

"The teacher uses games in the lessons, and it is fun."

U Aung Pyae writes: "I enjoy teaching the children, though it can be challenging. Sometimes while I am teaching one group, children in another group begin arguing.

I am truly happy to be helping children who genuinely need support. The children enjoy snack time together, and always come to greet me when I arrive. **At the end of the session, they do not want the class to end. Seeing how happy they are makes me very happy too.** My goal is to help them progress to the Learning Centre."

PALM provides long-term teacher development through repeated training sessions. I have gained a great deal of knowledge from these opportunities."

The impact of children's activities on their community:

There is a tradition in Myanmar culture of folk drama with a strong social message. **The Children's day performances by our students at Kalinehtaw village in November 2024 helped usher in a change in attitude among the villagers there.**

The theme of the event was children's right to protection. There was an exhibition, with different stalls highlighting various aspects of child protection, followed by several playlets which had been prepared by our Kalinehtaw students, and drew on their life experience.

The first play contrasted differing parenting styles. The first part depicted the **hardships faced by children when subjected to physical abuse and pushed into child labour** by their parents. The second part showed the positive development of a child raised with love and positive discipline.

The plot of the second playlet featured **an alcoholic, abusive father, and a mother so preoccupied with getting enough money to survive that she neglected her daughter's deepening despair**. There was real emotional connection with the drama, and the **audience was visibly shocked by the tragic death of the daughter near the end of the play.**

The moving performances of the children, as they roleplayed some of the



social problems endemic in the village, touched the hearts of the parents so deeply that **many were moved to tears**.

After the performances, parents were divided into groups and asked to reflect on how they felt regarding the situations their children had presented. The parents engaged actively, with even hesitant parents participating well. One of the committee members noted : **"The play directly reflected their own family situations. It touched their hearts and led them to the right understanding."**

The net effect of this, and the regular parent engagement sessions linked with distribution of emergency supplies, has been that, since then, Kalinehtaw parents have been taking much better care of their children's education, and are saving rather than getting into debt.

The current Chair of the local NFE committee, U Myint Kyaing, said: **"This class has been a true blessing for the children of our village.** The children are not like they used to be; since joining the Learning Centre, their speech, behaviour, and manners have completely transformed. The parents have changed too; and now understand the value of education."

Daw Aye Aye Myint is clear: "The 2024 performances, emergency support and parent education have resulted in less gambling, less drunkenness, less debt, and more children being sent to continue their education at the PALM Learning Centre."

3. Social work: With little or no experience of schooling and having had to work as children themselves, parents often do not understand the need for consistency in attendance, and readily withdraw children from class to help at home or work if money is tight. Our teachers act as social workers, visiting homes and ready to help with whatever domestic problem threatens the home environment for the children. We have a bursary fund too, with which to pay medical bills, repair homes etc..

Paying medical costs is particularly challenging for very poor families, often forcing them into debt, or to forego treatment. We do what we can to lift this burden from families, supporting medical costs of both students and family members, so that homes remain stable, and provide a good environments for children. **We know from experience that taking care of families in this way does much to ensure retention of students in our programme.**

Medical support: Ma Zin Mwe, who is 20 now, came the Learning Centre in 2024 when the orphanage where she had lived all her life had to close. Then, just as she was settling in, she discovered a lump in one of her breasts. The Learning Centre staff brought her to a private hospital in Yangon, and so began a process of diagnosis and treatment that has included two operations along with chemotherapy and regular checks. PALM



covered all medical and care costs.

While fearful at first, Ma Zin Mwe has shown great courage and resilience. Teachers and students from the Learning Centre took turns to stay with her while she was in hospital (as is expected of family members in Myanmar), and two of the Online Education Project teachers were able to visit her most days. Some of the young people from her former orphanage visited too.

Ma Zin Mwe writes:

"When I first met the surgeon, he told me that surgery was necessary. Since it was the only way to recover, I gathered my courage and agreed to the operation.

Later, during a follow-up visit, the doctor said that the lump had not been completely removed and that another operation would be needed. I cried a lot.

However, **my teachers and staff members stayed beside me, encouraged me, comforted me, and gave me warmth and support. I encouraged myself and found strength again.** After the second surgery, I no longer felt fear or anxiety. I was able to live happily. Now I continue taking my medication regularly. **I believe everything will improve and that I will recover completely. I will continue pursuing my goals with determination."**

The Principal of the Learning centre, Daw Hnin noted that Zin Mwe Theint has shown remarkable resilience throughout multiple surgeries, maintains a cheerful attitude, and has continued her studies despite the medical challenges.

4. Poverty alleviation: Many of our families are in debt to money-lenders at interest rates of between 20% and 30% per month. Typically, moneylenders do not push for the debt to be repaid early, preferring to collect the interest over months and years. The result is that a loan taken to fund medical costs grows, month by month, to an enormous sum. The impact on children's wellbeing is huge, with child labour often funding these interest payments. Since 2019 H4SS-PALM has been establishing savings groups to enable parents to get free from debt

Daw Aye Aye Myint (Operations Manager for NFE and poverty alleviation) describes the aims as: **"1. to alleviate poverty among parents of our students, 2. to foster good habits of household budgeting and regular saving, 3. to free members from the burden of high-interest loans, 4. to provide low interest loans so that parents can address urgent needs, 5. to allow members to borrow capital for investment and operate businesses, 6. to establish a 'money tree' for future generations within the family through consistent saving over the long term, 7. to enable parents to continue supporting their children's education as they go into vocational training or further education, and 8. to learn to support each other when anyone is in need."**

Savings scheme membership: Daw Khin Maw lives near Hlegu Township and earned a living for the family by collecting hair to sell on to a wig factory. She has 2 sons and 2 daughters. Her eldest son, Naing Maw Linn, who was out of school, joined the our NFE class at Kyan Tine Aung, in 2014. Around that time, Khin's husband



became bed-ridden. Later, she took a loan from a moneylender to pay for his hospital care, and so got into debt.

When we began our savings scheme in 2019, Daw Khin was entrusted with the role of chairperson for the group. She was very effective at saving money, and managed to repay her debt to the money-lender, by herself. During the pandemic, when poor families experienced much hardship, Daw Khin would visit the homes of parents to help work out what savings were manageable, and encourage them to maintain their contributions.

Daw Khin took a loan from the savings group to repair her small home in 2021, then in 2022 after her husband died, as investment to purchase pigs to raise. Throughout, she has maintained regular monthly savings deposits and loan repayments.

She continues as Chairperson, and consistently holds discussions to maintain unity and ensure the long-term sustainability of the group.

"Since joining the group, I have saved money every month. If I don't save, the money just slips away on household expenses and snacks for the kids. For making the savings deposits, I set aside money from my daily expenses. For the loan repayments, I pay them back from my end-of-month earnings."

Now, because we have been saving month after month, and year after year, the group has accumulated a large amount of money. **Whenever anyone is in need or facing hardship, the way everyone comes together shows the goodwill and support members have for one another. Our goal is to build row-houses for members who do not yet own homes,** allowing them to pay it back in instalments until they eventually own their own houses."

5. Online education project: Our Online Education Project (OEP) began in a small way during the pandemic, and has grown year by year. As well as providing secondary education to alumni of our NFE classes, in 2024, the project expanded to include young people from various ethnic backgrounds who had fled violence in their home villages and were staying in orphanages. However, the introduction of conscription in 2024 was worrisome for orphanage directors since many of these students were approaching 18 years of age. Thus, many students decided it was safer to return to their home villages, while some were able to enrol in formal school. This year, we have expanded the project to include four villages in Chin State.

This year, the OEP is providing education to 86 boys and 89 girls, 175 students in all.

Daw Theint (Operations Manager, Online Education Project) writes: “While local safety concerns sometimes required temporary suspension, only one class had to be closed because of the difficult security situation. Some of the students from that class will come to the PALM Learning Centre for the 2026-27 school year.

We were delighted to see improvements both in students’ academic abilities, and in their personal development. **Students who were previously shy and hesitant to speak in front of others became more confident and willing to express themselves publicly.** Their reading skills improved, their interest in seeking knowledge beyond the classroom increased, and some became role models for younger students. **In the 2025-26 year-end exams the pass rate was 81%.**

Establishing the classes in the remote and difficult terrain of Chin State was particularly challenging. Living in an economically disadvantaged region



without access to quality education or secure living conditions, and despite the ongoing conflict, the community was determined to provide a future for its children.

In response to the lack of basic infrastructure (the region has no phone reception and no functioning electricity grid) the **villagers saved enough to purchase their own solar power generators to charge their phones, and PALM shared 50% of the broadband and data cost.**

Through the work of our skilled online teachers, the students mastered the Burmese language, a vital development that unlocked the entire curriculum. Now, subjects like Mathematics and Science are accessible and understandable, helping to build a strong foundation for their future. Thus, the 2025–2026 academic year can be regarded as a successful year of teaching and learning.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all donors and supporters who provided financial assistance, making it possible for learning communities that have lost educational opportunities to access online education.”

Daw May Phoo (Senior Officer Online Education Project) writes:

“What I appreciate most about this work is that it allows me to support children who genuinely need assistance, and to contribute to improving their future opportunities and life paths. **Knowing that my work can make a meaningful difference in their lives has made me value this role even more.**

My feelings about the job today are very different from when I first started. I was not very confident then, but now find great joy and fulfillment in my work. I look forward to continuing to serve and support children in the years ahead.”

Ma Pa is an online student: Ma Pa's education was interrupted at a very young age. Her father was a daily worker, cutting trees for hire, while her mother tapped rubber. Ma Pa had just completed Grade 1 at a government school when her father lost a leg in a road accident. Ma Pa was withdrawn from school to carry him to work, on a bicycle. She also worked alongside him to support the family. Thus, she could not continue to Grade 2.

One day, while riding the bicycle with her father, she was unable to control the weight. The bicycle fell, leaving her father completely paralyzed. Ma Pa's mother worked as a daily laborer in a watermelon field. Unfortunately, she too was involved in a road accident and suffered broken ribs. That injury, along with diabetes, made it impossible for her to do heavy labour. As a result, the family had no choice but to depend on Ma Pa Phyto's 13-year-old elder brother as their only source of income.

Despite these painful circumstances, **Ma Pa never gave up her dream of education. She did not want to remain illiterate. She begged her mother to allow her to study, believing that education was her only hope for a better future.** Fearing that their daughter would face great hardship in life if she could not read or write, her parents agreed. Thus, in 2021, Ma Pa Phyto enrolled in the PALM NFE class in Kyauk Khae Lei Kwin, before joining our online programme in 2024.

Ma Pa Phyto writes:

"I continued studying online because it



was difficult for my family to afford the expenses of attending a regular school. Here, not only are there no school fees, but PALM provides emergency supplies for my family. PALM is supporting me to achieve my goals, so I chose to study here.

My dream is a career which involves computers. I decided to continue studying at the Learning Centre because I can learn computer skills there, and I believe it will also help improve my lifestyle and future.

Now, all of my older brothers and sisters are married, so when I go home only my parents and I live together.

Before, when there were friends around, I often talked with them during class time and could not concentrate well. However, this year, I have decided not to let chatting with friends distract me from my studies. **I want to enjoy spending time with friends while also staying focused on my education, so I have prepared myself mentally to balance both.**

In the past, I was weak in subjects like Social Studies and Life Skills, and I was too shy to participate in discussions. But now, that problem is gone. I can speak in front of others, and I have learned how to create mind maps as well.

In terms of behavior, there were times when I avoided doing my assigned tasks. Now, not only in the classroom but also in my surroundings, I try to keep the environment clean. Really, I have become someone who values good hygiene and a clean environment."

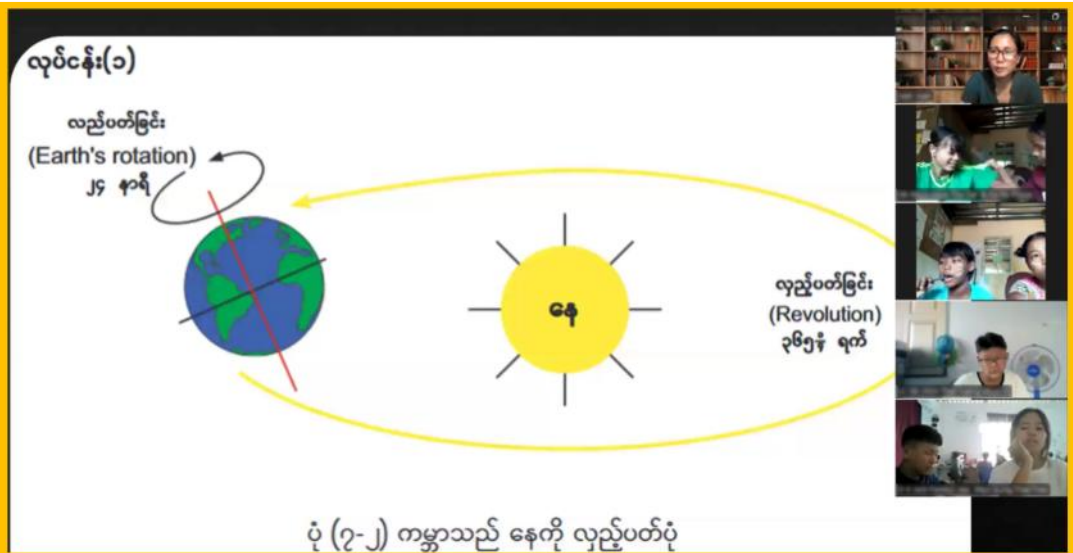
English teacher, Sayama Jamin writes: “I am proud to be able to support children who are in need. **They are highly enthusiastic about learning, obedient, study regularly, and always show good manners. Their eagerness to learn inspires us every day.** We strive to equip them with 21st-century skills, using various online learning tools and interactive teaching methods. Now that the new school year has begun, the children are excited to continue their educational journey. **I would like to thank donors for your generous support. Your contributions are helping to create a brighter future for these children.**”



Online Mathematics Teacher, Daw Su, writes: “I have now completed three years of working together with PALM. During this period, I encountered difficulties and challenges, but I also experienced great joy, satisfaction, and pride when my efforts bore fruit. **I came to realize that our students need even more love, warmth, and security than most other children. Beyond teaching the subject, I try to make their life journeys smoother and brighter, and nurture positive attitudes.** ”



Daw Su (left) and teaching Mathematics



Science teacher, Daw Wah Wah writes: “I have been especially touched by the dedication shown whenever practical activities and experiments were required. **Seeing everyone make every effort to find the necessary materials and resources so that the activities could be carried out successfully brought me immense joy and appreciation.** I would like to express how grateful and happy I am to have witnessed such commitment and support.”



Daw Wah Wah teaching rotation of the earth round the sun (above), and roleplay of the orbit (below)

Mg Phyto in an online student:

Mg Phyto joined one of our NFE classes in 2021, and helped his parents scavenge for plastic when not in class. In 2024, he moved to the Learning Center to study online for Grade 5.

Mg Phyto writes:

"I never had the chance to attend a government school. When I heard that there was a class providing education for children from low-income families, I decided to join. My dream is to become a car mechanic one day.

At first, online learning was very difficult for me. I felt lost. But over time, I became familiar with it and was able to focus better.

Being away from my parents was hard, and I missed them a lot. Still, I reminded myself that I was there for my education, and that gave me strength to continue. **I knew that without education, life would only become harder in the future.**

Before joining the online program, I used to stutter and was not confident in reading. My teachers encouraged us to speak in front of others during online classes, and gradually I became more confident. I started reading more, speaking more clearly, and eventually my stuttering disappeared.

Now that I am one of the older students at the LC, I feel responsible for helping younger students.



Page 24: Mg Phyto in class activities
Page 25: Saya Armann and online classes in the Learning Centre

Burmese language teacher

Armann writes: "The students in this project are mostly out-of-school children and have faced difficulty enrolling in government schools. Many come from different ethnic groups, so are unfamiliar with the Myanmar language. Despite these challenges, the students were eager to learn. Their enthusiasm and active participation was confirmation that I had chosen the right career path.

I try to make learning easy and engaging for them. Before each class, I prepare PowerPoint presentations and lesson plans. I enjoy the preparation process, and designing teaching methods for different education needs has helped me gain confidence as a teacher. **Seeing my students gradually improve is very rewarding.** Some became able to write essays confidently and participate in impromptu speaking contests and debate competitions. Although online classes often faced internet connection difficulties, the students continued learning enthusiastically.

The three years I spent with PALM have passed very quickly, and have taught me not only how to teach, but also how to grow as a person. **I am truly proud to be part of this project."**

New online classes in Chin State: Our contact with Chin State arose from a scholarship we gave to a boy by the name of Thang in 2010. Thang's home village was high in the Chin hills, an area without access to quality education or secure living conditions. This already difficult situation has been made worse by the current civil war, leading to the collapse of the education system in that area. Thang's home village community was determined to provide a future for its children. Initially, we supported them with stationery, but because delivery was difficult, provided direct cash assistance instead.

Power supply, mobile and broadband signals were largely absent there, so the villagers raised enough money to purchase their own solar powered generator, and PALM contributed towards the subscription to a satellite broadband system. Finally, in 2025, it became possible to provide online training for teachers, as well as classes for children.

U Yaw, the coordinator of the local group writes:

"During the 2021–2022 academic year, there was much fighting in our area, and our children were left feeling hopeless and unsure of what to do. I thought it would be good if we could gather whatever resources we had and teach the children so they would not lose touch with education. **When I called a meeting with parents, they rejected the idea twice, saying that opening a school during that period would be too dangerous. Finally, at the third meeting, two parents said, 'If the person who is willing to teach is speaking so passionately about it, then even if no one else sends their children, we will send ours. Please teach them.'**

That was how we began accepting students. As more and more children enrolled, it grew to include almost the entire village. We then recruited willing young volunteers to help. **At first, we could only open classes up to Grade 4. However, middle-school students wanted to return to school and would come and peek through the windows.**



So when we reopened for a second time during the 2021–2022 academic year, we expanded the school to include middle-school levels as well.

I began reaching out to various NGOs that might be able to support our school in one way or another. However, every organization I contacted turned us down. The main reasons were that our village had no phone service, and was located at the very end of the road network.

Still, I thought I would find a possible way forward. So I told Saya Thang that our village's education system was facing these kinds of difficulties, and I asked him for help in contacting any organizations that might be able to assist us. He replied that he would try his best, and it was he who put us in touch with PALM, and Daw Aye Aye Thinn offered to help. **The opportunities we have today were made possible by PALM's support and assistance. One opportunity led to another opportunity for us till we were able to establish the online learning programme. PALM staff worked hard to coordinate so that a high school program could be opened and become accessible for them.** All of these encouragements and forms of support came from S4SK and PALM. **Thank you so much!"**

U Mar, our facilitator in a neighbouring village said:

"The online program has enabled many children who had been out of school for a long time to return to their studies. They have also learned to set goals and work toward them.

Also **PALM organized competitions, which helped students become more confident in speaking and expressing themselves.** This year, PALM has provided tablets, so I believe students' learning experiences and outcomes will be even better than last year. **On behalf of our village, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all have made online education possible for us, Daw Theint, PALM, and S4SK, who are supporting PALM."**

From the top: weeding an upland rice field, building the online classroom, and online classes with local facilitators

6. Successive opportunities: Provision of successive opportunities for education and training to bring about real change in children's lives has been a key part of our philosophy from the start. Vocational training (VT) scholarships sponsored by S4SK have included health and social care, sewing and tailoring, hairdressing, electrical appliance maintenance, domestic electrical circuitry, plumbing, mobile phone repair, welding, motorbike and auto repair, air-con servicing, network engineering and dentistry to name a few. Once qualified, students can access low-interest start-up loans linked with the family savings scheme.

Careers in Nursing: These two girls were enrolled in our Learning Centre when the orphanage where they had been living closed in 2024. Both wanted to follow careers in nursing. At the Learning Centre they attended the Computer Studies course and joined our online classes. Both received scholarships to study nursing and pharmacy, and now are working as nursing assistants in a beauty clinic.

Ma Nilar writes: "When I first arrived at the Learning Centre, I felt fearful and uncertain because it was a new place. I fainted, and the teachers had to take me to hospital.

I gradually became happy because of the warm welcome from the teachers and other students. Not only getting the chance to study, but being able to learn



the skills necessary for a livelihood is very valuable to me. I will use this opportunity seriously and strive to be someone who can be a support for my family. **A new hope has emerged in my life. Now I feel confident and have hope for the future.**

At the Learning Centre, there were weekly meetings where we can present whether things were going well or not. We took it in turns to do the chores.

There was group discussion, and the Youth Talk program trained us to speak confidently in public. **I became much more confident in relating to others, something that is important to my work now.** The care and support of the PALM Learning Centre has been important for my life."

Ma Nyein writes: "My mother passed away when I was very young, and I was adopted by my aunt. However, because my aunt faced financial hardships, she sent me to the orphanage in 2019 while I was in Grade 7. I studied there till Grade 11.

When the orphanage closed in 2024, I moved to the PALM Learning Centre.

I am happy to be in this place because it is an environment that can help realize my ambitions and goals. It also allowed me to attend nursing and computer courses.

My ultimate goal is to become a nurse so that I can provide healthcare services to the sick, young children, the elderly, as well as take care of my own health."

Ma Nilar and Ma Nyein visiting the PALM office in Yangon

Ma Aye Myat (top photo), from the same orphanage, now works as a nursing assistant at a well-respected private hospital in Yangon:

"I am thrilled that I finally have the opportunity to bring my dream to life. I felt deeply satisfied and happy during the training because I received both theoretical and practical education. **I am passionate about nursing, and profoundly grateful to S4SK and PALM for supporting me to achieve the goal I have held since childhood.**

I feel very grateful to all the teachers for supporting us to attend vocational training courses based on our dreams, and helping us settle into our careers. The teachers treat all of us like their own children, teaching us with sincerity. I can truly feel their metta (loving-kindness)."

Ma Oh Mar (middle photo) had never been enrolled in school until she joined one of our NFE classes at the age of 12. She spent 3 years following the NFE syllabus before coming to live in the Learning Centre:

"As a child, I dreamed of becoming a fashion designer, and still have a passion for design. My current focus is on building a sustainable business.

Through my vocational training and guidance from my employer, I have learned not only technical skills but also valuable lessons in financial management, and running a business. My employer has promised to provide mentorship when I start my own business.

I provide regular support whenever my family needs it, but avoid giving all my income, so as to continue saving the capital needed for my business. **I intend to pursue advanced-level training in fashion design, as I believe continuous learning is essential to achieving my career aspirations.** Looking ahead, I hope to get married



around the age of 32 after I have become financially stable.

Reflecting on my time at the Learning Centre, I estimate that the experience has contributed about 60% of my personal growth. **My communication and interpersonal skills were strengthened, and my confidence in interacting with others, including foreigners, increased. I also developed greater self-discipline and independence there.**

The experience inspired me to keep learning, so as to be able to make a meaningful contribution to my family and the community.

Ultimately, I believe in the importance of fully understanding oneself, one's own strengths, weaknesses, and challenges, before setting personal goals. My greatest strength is strong motivation to work and learn. My biggest challenge is acquiring sufficient start-up capital.

I plan to specialize in selling fabrics imported from Bangkok, and feel that the knowledge and practical experience I have gained in garment production, fashion design, market trends, and customer preferences have been good preparation. Nevertheless, I will continue to learn from others, and actively prepare myself to establish my own business in the future."

The PALM Finance and Administration team do a marvellous job procuring and distributing teaching-learning materials, taking emergency support rations to desperate families and keeping accurate accounts.

Left to right: Ma Hnin Aye (Admin & Logistics Officer), U Min Thant (Finance & HR Assistant)
Daw Lin Lin (Admin and Finance Manager)

Min Ko Ko Naing was with us for 9 years in NFE class and the PALM Learning Centre:

“While at the PALM Learning Centre, I didn’t like being reprimanded, so I used to volunteer to lead cleaning duties. This habit has stayed with me, and now I am proactive with everything. Whenever I spot a task that needs doing in the workplace, I just do it without waiting to be asked.

After finishing my time at E4Y vocational college, I enrolled in a 3-month electrical wiring and repair course. My first job was with a small company, where I could apply my classroom theory directly to real electrical systems. However, there were problems. I had to commute between clients by public transport. But, for jobs requiring taking two different bus routes, I had to pay the second fare out of my own pocket, which was unfair. Then, because of bus times, I could only service two houses a day. To make matters worse, I was only allowed one single day off per month.

The breaking point came when the employer started to blame me for his own mistakes. Tired of being scolded for things beyond my control, I resigned. While I was job-hunting, PALM informed me about an open position at another company where some older PALM students already had jobs.

My teachers really supported me. Daw Aye Aye Thinn roleplayed interview sessions with me over Zoom, and Teacher U Paing Phyto, from the Learning Centre, personally escorted me to the interview. I was offered the job. My work now involves assembling and installing equipment. This is a better place to work. The company does not accept appointments after 3:00 PM if the task cannot be completed the same day. Unfinished jobs are simply pushed to the next morning, so we never have to rush. Senior colleagues mentor me, and we are free at weekends.

I am careful how I manage my income and, together with the other PALM boys, have set up a savings group with PALM. I send money home to my mum every month. With my finances steadily growing and a stable career now, my girlfriend and I plan to get married in 2030.”



Mg Naing Maw Linn joined an NFE class aged 9, and was with us for 10 years before becoming independent:

“At E4Y I learned carpentry and design which I enjoyed a lot, and was even invited to assist foreign instructors during practical sessions. After graduating, I spent two years working as a house painter back in my village. Seeking to expand my skills, I took a job at a furniture business under a local craftsman. The pay was OK, but I had to cook for myself, which was inconvenient after a long day. Worse than that, the employer was short-tempered and would frequently insult my mother. It was not a respectful working environment, so I resigned after nine months. Then, I joined with my friend, in setting up at furniture-making business for two years.

In 2024, I started working at Alpha Power Co., Ltd., and have remained here ever since. The physical labour here is much lighter. **I work in the warehouse logging computer inventory codes and inputting product names. It requires a lot of focus. In fact, I have memorized the names and warehouse locations of over 1,000 items. I take careful notes. My life is much more stable now. When I return home from work, I enjoy dinner with my mum and can give her money every month.**

Once, when Po Po John visited the Learning Centre, we told him all about the colours and designs of football jerseys we wanted. He listened intently, and said he would try to give us some. Then on his next visit, he brought them for us, exactly as he promised! Today, I try always to keep my word exactly, just like he did. **I am an active member of our savings group, and hope to establish my own business some day. In preparation, I spend my free time actively studying online business trends, particularly how furniture can be marketed abroad. I am determined to keep learning, saving, and building a business venture that I can truly call my own.”**

Top two photos are of Min Ko Ko with Daw Aye Aye Thinn and at work, and the bottom three of Naing Maw as a boy, then carpenter, and now assistant warehouse manager

7. Specialist teacher training:

Daw Aye Aye Thinn writes: “PALM has consistently focused on improving the quality of education for children and youth. We believe that achieving quality education depends on the quality of teachers. Therefore, teacher capacity building and professional development are central to our programme. PALM regularly provides refresher training for both non-formal education and online teachers. Five-day NFE teacher training courses to strengthen subject mastery and teaching skills are conducted quarterly. In addition, NFE teacher refresher trainings are designed based on mentors’ findings.

PALM’s online teaching approach emphasises an active learning approach, integrating YouTube videos, songs and pictures as teaching aids, while also engaging students in practical activities such as experiments and role-playing activities. This approach makes online learning more interactive, participatory, and meaningful for students.

Key to the success of PALM’s online education model has been the appointment of local Online Class Facilitators (OCFs), who prepare required teaching aids, help students stay engaged during lessons, and keep up with homework. As a result, **children are able to learn in a more engaged way, using hands-on exercises to observe, explore, and better understand.**

In 2025–26, PALM implemented a “Health and Psychosocial Well-Being” programme, funded by UNESCO. PALM developed the teacher manual for this course and **provided training to teachers so that they could support children in building social and emotional learning skills as well as healthy habits.** Feedback from teachers was positive, with many reporting meaningful changes in both teachers’ and children’s mindsets and behaviours. Teachers and students involved in the project consistently expressed that this course be provided to every teacher and every school each year.”



Teachers’ comments included: “Because of this project, I have come to understand why teenagers feel the way they do and why they act and speak a certain way. I learned the right methods to approach and guide them in a way that wins their trust. It also made me more self-aware. This has brought about so many benefits. “

“I want this project to reach schools in other regions as well. If this could be officially integrated as part of the school curriculum, it would make it much easier to coordinate schedules with other teachers and make the teaching process far more effective. “

“The workshops, frequent monitoring visits, and the subsequent feedback, advice, and assistance provided, made this project even more effective. Therefore, this is a highly successful, impactful, and beneficial project. I hope this kind of training will be opened and taught again in the future. “

“This project realistically addresses and resolves the difficulties and issues children face in the present day, while instilling lifelong good habits for both mental and physical health. “

“I have learned how to connect the lessons to the children's daily lives. By understanding the mindsets of adolescents, managing them has become much easier. I am thrilled to have had the opportunity to attend and learn from Phoenix Academy. I am extremely grateful to the senior instructors who delivered the training.”

“This training is incredibly beneficial for the children. Over the course of these 5 months, the children have changed so much. I would like to suggest extending the project duration to 1 or 2 years.”

Course sessions at the PALM office in Yangon, and in Mandalay

The PALM Learning Centre: The PALM Learning Centre opened in 2014 to help alumni of our non-formal education (NFE) classes make the transition to the more formal approach they will experience in vocational colleges in Yangon. In this school year, the centre is accommodating 13 girls in two buildings, and 6 boys in a third. A further 10 students commute each day from their homes. The centre is overseen by three resident teachers.

While computing and sewing courses are conducted in person, academic subjects are provided through our Online Education Project, with the centre's teachers acting as class facilitators, and supervising a homework class each evening. There are weekly meetings at which students can share any issues arising in community life, and homework classes each evening.

As with all our work, there is an emphasis on active participation. Students are encouraged to express their views and support each other. In view of the big changes taking place in our students' lives as they move to work and educational environments, we make sure that counselling is always available.

The Learning Centre also hosts a savings scheme serving the families of four NFE classes in the vicinity of Hlegu, along with a group dedicated to alumni of the Learning Centre. Staff do their best to improve the lives of our students and their families.



In the words of current and former students:

"I have gained a solid understanding of both computer software and hardware, and now can both install Windows and set up software. Participating in the 'Youth Talk' discussions—where we read books and exchange ideas—has really helped me find the courage to speak up in front of public audiences and significantly improved my presentation skills. **My father keeps telling me how the villagers have been praising my conduct and achievements.**"

"Although I felt very sad when I first arrived, **the kindness of the teachers and older students quickly made me happy.** By my second year, while my old friends had moved on, I made new ones. I also found myself working much harder. Now in my third year, I feel much more mature. Thanks to the tailoring lessons, I can now sew clothes at home."

"In English class, the teacher plays cartoon videos to help us practice. **In Science, I find the practical experiments interesting, and enjoy drawing the diagrams.**"

"The days I spend here will remain warm memories. **Waking up early to learn alongside my friends has made me keen to study.** Whenever I face difficulties, my friends' encouragement gives me the strength to move forward."

Staff, students and activities at the PALM Learning Centre

Daw Aye Aye Myint, NFE Operations Manager writes:

“What truly sets PALM apart from other organizations, where educational support typically lasts only 2 to 3 years, is our lifelong commitment. We nurture these children like our own until they successfully enter the workforce. We believe that transforming a child requires uplifting their family too. By introducing financial literacy and systematic savings-and-loans mechanisms, we have inspired the parents within our learning circles to become active members of our savings group. By replicating our organization's proven model, I have empowered four community groups in areas surrounding our classes to set up their own savings schemes.

Our students come from very poor backgrounds, and we do our best to bring real change to their lives. **Acting as a bridge of compassion between generous donors and families in need fulfills me deeply.”**

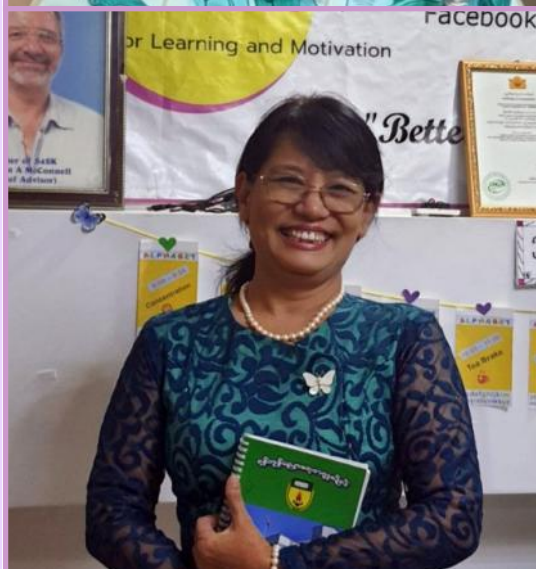
Daw Myint Myint Shwe (PALM, Finance Director) writes:

“On behalf of PALM, I would like to express deep appreciation for the generous support and commitment of S4SK. Thanks to you, many children, living in learning poverty, have gained access to quality learning opportunities, developed new skills, improved their knowledge, and increased their confidence to pursue better futures. I am so proud of working in PALM as a member of Staff.”

Daw Aye Aye Thinn (PALM, Education Director) writes:

“Since the political crisis began in 2021, the education sector has been particularly hard hit. According to recent data, more than 6.3 million out of 13 million school-age children were unable to enroll in school this academic year, indication of the scale and urgency of the education crisis.

PALM has also faced significant challenges, including insecurity among older students and family members due to conscription, risks in carrying stationery and IT equipment to remote locations, unstable internet connections, soaring prices of basic goods and services, and staff concerns



regarding salary amid the economic crisis.

Five years ago, I expected improvements in Myanmar’s formal education sector to reduce the number of out-of-school children. However, the current reality is far from that. As well as supporting the same vulnerable children, we are now reaching new groups who have lost access to education because of the political crisis.

Despite these difficulties, PALM has been able to continue, and we have expanded our programme with two additional online classes in Chin State, and have increased classes up to Grade 11, across all subjects. Altogether, there are now 176 students (87 boys and 89 girls) receiving online education.

The children we serve experience hardship in different ways. In urban areas, many suffer from chronic family poverty, and see no future beyond family survival. In contrast, children in Chin State live with the fear of airstrikes and bombardment, and have lost hope for the future. **Through our online classes, our Chin students have been able to regain a sense of normal student life. They have reconnected with learning, built friendships with students from other areas, and participated happily in educational activities.** Our classes are going some way to **restore hope and a sense of purpose** to children living in difficult circumstances. Chin communities have been very happy to receive this support, and have requested expansion of provision.

Finally, I would like to express my **heartfelt thanks to all S4SK donors who have continuously supported our children in their journey toward a better life. Through this support, we have been able to witness meaningful changes in both parents and students, and their voices clearly reflect the positive impact of our work. I am truly grateful for the opportunity, your support has given me, to contribute my knowledge and skills to help these terribly disadvantaged children.** I remain committed to continuing this work to the best of my ability.”

Dear Friends and Supporters,

I would like to thank you all for your generous support, over the past year.

The situation in Myanmar is still challenging, but we have been able to respond, and even expand our work. Reading the stories of older students and alumni, it is heartening to see the progress they have made. Truly we are giving them futures that would simply have been impossible otherwise.

I am deeply grateful to our friends in PALM who give so much of their time, energy, compassion, and courage too, to help educate and guide our students. It is a real privilege to work with them.

Please help us if you can. S4SK is a small charity. Apart from the costs of printing and distributing this booklet, all admin costs at S4SK, including communication and travel, are covered by donation from the trustees. So you can be sure that roughly 99.5% of your donation will go to the work you see here. Please help us to continue to bring hope to the lives of these terribly disadvantaged children.

In friendship,



John McConnell (Managing Trustee, S4SK)

Please support our work:

1. By cheque or charity voucher to the treasurer at the address below, and made payable to Scholarships for Street Kids;

2. By electronic transfer to Scholarships for Street Kids Lloyds Bank plc, Branch: Hustlergate, Bradford, A/C No: 00376613, Sort Code: 30-91-12. Or use the IBAN code: GB68LOYD30911200376613. Please email the treasurer at: s4skfinance@gmail.com when you make a donation;

3. By regular donation (Standing Order) please email the treasurer to receive a donation form at: s4skfinance@gmail.com.

Gift Aid: If you are a taxpayer, you can also boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate. Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer. In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below:

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