



SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STREET KIDS

Report and Appeal - 2020



**Working to provide educational opportunities
for very poor children in Myanmar**

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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**Sheila Kaye (Trustee), Anna Young (Secretary), Erica Cadbury (Treas.),
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In Myanmar, we are Hope for Shining Stars (H4SS)

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**Aye Aye Thinn (Dir.), Phyto Thandar Aye (Proj. Man.), Lwin Moe Htay (Fin.), Wah
Wah Thwin, Aye Aye Myint, El Zin Bel Say (all Mentors), and Pyi Hein (Admin)**



Some of our staff, teachers and students outside the Learning Centre in Hlegu

**Together, S4SK and H4SS work to bring real change to
the lives of severely deprived children.**

S4SK and H4SS, 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 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 team of staff and supporters in Myanmar, and we formed a local NGO which, in 2016, registered as Hope for Shining Stars (H4SS), (Reg. No: 1/PT/0172). H4SS's Advisory Board includes professional educationists, and a former Department of Social Welfare director. John McConnell serves as Chief Advisor. H4SS staff and Advisory Board include Buddhists, Christians, Hindus and Muslims and we provide the same opportunities to children of all ethnic and religious backgrounds. Approximately 50% of our students are girls. Last year, S4SK funded around 39% of H4SS work, the rest coming from the International Labour Organisation (31%), Child Fund Myanmar (26%), Burmese Community Development Collaboration (3%), and general donations (1%).

The children we are here to help:



Most of the children we help are out-of-school and working in full-time jobs from as young as 8 or 9. They make bricks, peel beans, carry building materials, scavenge for recyclables etc. to contribute to the family income. Their families have been illiterate for generations and regard child labour as normal. There are monastic schools which will accept children completely free of charge, but these families cannot afford the loss of income incurred by children attending school full-time. Thus child-labourers become trapped in poverty, unable to access education at the time in their lives when they need to be in school. **Provision of education alone is not enough; it needs to be paralleled with care for the economic situation of the families.**

A strategy that works, and achievements in 2019-20:

Over the past 13 years, we have developed a strategy that releases children from this poverty trap, and gives them access to education:



1. Accessible education: Activity-based non-formal education (NFE) classes are fun and require no previous schooling. Last year H4SS provided NFE to 504 children (256 boys + 248 girls) in 34 classes, of which 11 classes and 150 class places were funded by S4SK.

2. Compensation for lost income:

Family Support (FS) payments compensate families for lost earnings while children are in class. This is paid monthly to parents, when progress of students and the support they need are discussed. Last year, H4SS provided FS to 386 students, 166 of them funded by S4SK.



3. Parent engagement: Parents often join children in class, and there are quarterly parent workshops where they can discuss lifestyle issues affecting children's health and education. Last year, H4SS provided parent education to 362 families, 116 funded by S4SK.

4. Social work, and emergency fund: Our teachers make home-visits to help resolve problems before they lead to children being withdrawn. Last year, H4SS visited every student's family home at least twice, 116 of these visits funded by S4SK. Last year the families of 24 students received bursary help with expenditure, the most frequent items being medical bills and house repair.

5. Successive opportunities: Income-generating activities during the NFE curriculum are followed by scholarships for vocational training or further study. **Last year, H4SS provided scholarships at various levels to 261 (100 boys + 161 girls) students, 157 (57 boys + 100 girls) of them funded by S4SK.**



6. Building teacher capacity: Careful training and mentoring ensures that teachers provide quality education and support for children and families. **Last year H4SS trained and mentored 29 teachers (15 funded by S4SK) and 7 volunteers, and mentors made 3 visits to each class.**

7. Poverty alleviation: A savings scheme and low-interest top-up loan can mitigate or resolve family debt in time for NFE alumni to access full-time vocational training. **Savings groups were established in Hlegu and Pakkoku. Last year, 19 families participated, of whom 5 were able to repay money-lenders, and 2 have repaid their loans to H4SS completely.**



8. Disability inclusion: We welcome disabled students in our classes, and have one class dedicated to their education. **Last year, H4SS taught 24 disabled children, with 19 class places funded by S4SK.**

9. Covid protection: We conducted Covid hygiene education and modified class seating in line with WHO advice. **We provided food hampers to 109 desperate families, and at time of writing, our sewing students have made more than 1,000 child-sized face-masks. We are in process of providing extra washing stations for each class.**

Non-formal education (NFE), family support and social work:

Out-of-school children: According to a nationwide survey by the Ministry of Education and UNICEF in 2018, in Myanmar, 12.26% of primary school-age children and 11.7% of lower secondary school-age children are out of school. Some will have dropped out after a year or two of primary education, while others will never have enrolled. Most are out of school because they are breadwinners for their families.

Non-formal education (NFE): We run NFE classes for these children. Each class is preceded by engagement with the local community. We draw together parents, community leaders and local officials, and ask them to survey the need in the area. If it seems that a class is viable, this group forms a local Non-formal Education Committee (NFEC), which helps establish, and oversee the class. The NFEC identifies trusted local people with education to be trained as teachers, finds a venue, and helps identify the most needy families.

Support for families: For these families, sending a child to school can mean going hungry or not being able to afford medicines. Our family support payments help to solve this problem. Families are compensated monthly for loss of earnings while children are in class, and these occasions used to discuss child rights (particularly the problem of child-labour), and lifestyle issues which affect child development.





Social work: Illiterate families have many problems (poor health, debt, addiction, and insecure housing etc), and their response to a crisis is to bring their children out of school to help at home or work. The aim of our social work is to help resolve problems before they lead to the withdrawal of the child from class. Around one third of teacher time is allocated to home visits and social work. Our mentors coordinate and arrange emergency support from the social work bursary if needed.

Active learning: Many children joining our classes have little or no experience of schooling, so we design lessons to be activity-based, and not heavily dependent on previous schooling. An integrated curriculum helps develop students' capacity for inquiry and problem-solving. Classes are fun, and the children quickly come to love learning.

Teacher capacity building: We train our teachers, mentor them regularly in their classrooms, and arrange monthly meetings to plan lessons and share difficulties. There is a good team spirit among them. Our classes are happy and active places. Parents often drop in and it is good to see their pride at their children's work.

Combining education with social protection is central to our work. However good the education we provide, if we ignore the poverty of families, we will not be able to reach these children.

An H4SS teacher's story:



Where possible, we employ teachers who live in the same localities as their classes, and are known and respected. Nwe Ni Win joined H4SS in 2013:

“When I was young, my father was incapacitated and could not work for five years. This had a huge economic impact on our family, and my elder siblings could not attend high school. My younger brother and I were the only ones to get a proper education. Kyauk Khe Kwin village is in a remote area, with no proper road. To get to school each day I had to walk two miles along a hilly track, then cycle one mile to the main road to get the bus – altogether two hours each way.

After high school, I studied Theology. My family encouraged me to become a pastor, but I felt differently. My village was badly underdeveloped. Like me, the children were finding it difficult to attend school because transportation was so difficult. It is worse in the rainy season when, across the valley, the paths fill with mud and it is very dangerous to walk or ride. Most would stay at home, without schooling, spending their time picking bamboo shoots and mushrooms in the forest, and selling them at market.

Rather than becoming a pastor, I decided to devote myself to teaching these poor children. Everyone has their particular ambition for life. For me it was to become a teacher, and to help the poor people from my village. While I am Christian, my aim is to help these children's lives through education, not to persuade to convert their faith.

H4SS-S4SK trained me in teaching and social work skills. We had monthly meetings to share experience, prepare lesson plans, and discuss problems together. Our capacity as teachers improved and we were satisfied with our teaching and with our students' progress. I think our standards were quite high because some of the students from our classes who transferred to state schools came top of the class there.

With the support of my father, the villagers built a classroom from wood and bamboo sheets. H4SS-S4SK provided the salary and running costs, and I taught the children in 3 shifts according to their availability. Teaching was my

strongest desire and so I was very happy to work. The children were happy too, and some received prizes at the H4SS annual meeting.

My father died suddenly in 2016, and I needed to stop teaching for some time in order to care for my mother. I discussed the problem with the H4SS Non-formal Education Committee and, based on the history of the NFE class, we applied for a government school to be established, and sought donations. Eventually, we could build a 'branch primary school' (top and next below), which opened with 2 teachers for over 45 students. However, there were 5 classes (KG to Grade 4), which was rather too much for 2 teachers, so I asked H4SS to support a third teacher. H4SS supported the teacher's salary, and the school could run smoothly.

Even though there was now a government school, there were still around 12 working children who could not attend the whole day, so I opened a new NFE class (second from bottom) to teach them.

Another problem was that, because many of the parents work is seasonal (agriculture in the rainy season, then brick-making and rubber-tapping when it is dry), they have to be away from the village for weeks at a time. They asked to let their children live with me while they were away. Remembering my own difficulties, I decided to sell some of the land my father had left, and use the money to build a hostel (bottom right). People said I should deposit the money in the bank, but I decided to help those children and families. I have not been able to complete the interior yet (room partitions, bed platforms, etc.) because of insufficient funds, but I hope to complete it soon."



Disability inclusion:



This NFE class, near Bago, has attracted disabled children from miles around. The lead teacher, Nan Thida Khaing (in the green blouse), writes: “Most of the students in my class have disabilities – autism, Down’s syndrome, and cerebral palsy. They have a strong desire to learn, and want to be treated the same as the able children. It is very rewarding to teach these children, because they like me and cooperate in class, and I can see their progress. I feel satisfied.”

This is **Aung Ko Ko** (in the blue T-shirt right). His father sells lottery tickets and his mother sells brooms in the street. Aung Ko has severe hearing and speech impairment, and was kept at home until 12 when his mother tried to enroll him in school. The teacher could not cope with him however and referred him to H4SS. Our teacher, Nan Thida, writes: “At first he could not work with others. I communicated our loving-kindness through body language, and we





purchased a hearing aid for him. Gradually, Aung Ko Ko became more cooperative, and keen to learn. He is a genius with handcraft, and has learned to repair fans, watches and locks. He is outstanding in sport too, and played for the Myanmar national football team, in Laos, where his team won the silver award.

His kind-heartedness shines through in the way he treats younger classmates. I believe that, with vocational training, he will do well in life."

Ye Yint Aung (left), 15, is autistic, and has Down's syndrome. His mother said: "Before joining the NFE class, he could not speak well. He dared not go to the crowded place, make friends, or relate to other people. His memory is good, but he can't open his fingers. As soon as I heard the news about the NFE class in 2014, I did not delay to enroll him there. Now he can read, and communicate better. His attitude at home has improved too. If he sees I am washing the clothes, he told me that he wanted to help me."

Nan Thida writes: "Ye Yint did not have any experience of schooling, but wanted to learn. Now, he has become clever and relates well in class. He

encourages other students to pay attention, and supports me during field trips, checking that other children do not play recklessly, or get lost. He did well in sports too, winning prizes for soft ball throwing in the 2019 and 2020 Myanmar Disabled Sports Competitions, in Yangon."

Bridging the gap between non-formal and formal education:

We offer scholarships to alumni of NFE classes to continue their education. The H4SS Learning Centre at Hlegu helps bridge the gap between our non-formal education classes and colleges in Yangon which have a more formal approach. Many attend Education for Youth (E4Y) and the Centre for Vocational Training (CVT), both Swiss-funded vocation-oriented colleges.



Some students and staff pictured outside the H4SS Learning Centre

Activities at the Learning Centre last year:

- Sewing and tailoring classes attended by 14 students;
- A daily NFE class with children bused in from around Hlegu;
- Accommodation for 29 alumni of NFE classes studying at educational institutions in Yangon, of whom 22 were at E4Y and 1 at CVT;
- A daily homework and study-guidance class from 7-10pm to help students make the best of their study;
- Counselling to help students adjust from rural life to the demands of educational institutions in Yangon;
- A basic computer skills class (using equipment donated by Burmese Development Community Collaboration) attended by 10 E4Y students;
- A weekly meeting of staff and students to discuss and make decisions regarding life at the Learning Centre.

Helping students to make the most of their study: The Learning Centre is geared to making further education possible for alumni of NFE classes, many of them from rural backgrounds.



Learning Centre staff: Thein Thein Htay (Principal), Than Than Mon (Sewing Tutor), Kyi Hpyar (English teacher), Khin Zaw Aung (NFE Teacher), Phyo Ko Ko (Supervisor)

While the teaching at E4Y is of high quality, many of our students find the workload rather high, especially in their first year. The formal environment of an educational institution in the city, with high goals and standards to be met, and weekly deadlines for homework, is a world away from the life of agricultural labourers or fisher-folk. To help bridge this divide we provide a daily homework and guided study class. To make sure we keep in tune with the E4Y approach, we coordinate with E4Y teachers, and Kyi Hpyar occasionally sits in with our students in E4Y classes.

After 4 years at E4Y, students can apply for high quality professional courses at CVT, whose qualifications are respected across Myanmar.



S4SK funds the entire cost of the Learning Centre as well as all associated scholarships.

Some older students: Provision of opportunities for vocational training and further education helps to bring real change to young people's lives. Here are some who gained awards or career opportunities this year.



Saung Hnin Phyu is 21, and from Pyay. Her father is a manual labourer, while her mother sells vegetables in the street. Saung Hnin was accepted for a Computer Studies degree but, with two children at school, her mother could not afford the cost. The head teacher advised that Saung Hnin had much potential, and a solution was found; the younger sister transferred to a nunnery school (which does not expect contributions from parents) and an uncle supported costs.



This arrangement enabled Saung Hnin to complete the first year. However, in the middle of the second year, her uncle was transferred to another state, and could no longer help. Her headmistress encouraged her to apply for an H4SS-S4SK scholarship, and we supported Saung Hnin for the remaining three and a half years. Meanwhile her mother joined our savings group and started attending Parent Education sessions.



Results were good; Saung Hnin achieved distinctions in five subjects, came second in the year, and now is employed as a network engineer in Yangon. In her spare time, she has been teaching at the Learning Centre (bottom left).



She writes: "I promise to use this bachelor degree honestly and usefully for people, and for poor students like me. Thank you."

Pho Reh is from the Kayah ethnic group (formerly known as Karenni). His family are landless farmers, renting a field annually, their income dependent on the (variable) harvest. Pho Reh's elder siblings had dropped out of middle school in order to work, but Pho Reh's teacher could see his ability, and personally supported him through his last year of high school, describing him as, "a smart, obeying and upright student". Pho Reh wanted to study dentistry at university but this was completely unaffordable for the family.



A Kayah NGO worker helped him to apply for a scholarship with H4SS, and Pho Reh graduated this year after a 5 year degree. Pho Reh writes:
“My family did not have enough money to send me to the University and my brothers and sisters could give me just pocket money. Because of the support of H4SS-S4SK, I could have education access. My parents could not have carried the burden of my education cost. The grant covered both the living cost and education cost, which was very helpful for me. I heartily thank S4SK very much for this. I wish that S4SK support more students like me. I will try hard to be a good doctor to contribute for the people.”



Zaw Myo Oo is 20 years of age now and is the young man on the left in the family photo. His parents are landless farm workers. At 10, his mother withdrew him from primary school, and sent him to an orphanage school: “I worried about his future. He ... could not spell even his name. At least I wanted him to be able to read and write.”

The following year, in 2012, because there were so many out-of-school children in the area, H4SS opened an NFE class there. Since he was so far behind, the teachers placed Zaw Myo in our class. He responded well to H4SS’s activity-based education and, in 2014, was accepted for Education for Youth (E4Y) vocational school and started living at the H4SS Learning Centre.

During his second year there, both parents needed operations. H4SS



supported the medical costs so that Zaw Myo Oo could continue his studies. There was another crisis two years later, but by then, the H4SS savings scheme was running, and the family could borrow at low interest to invest in seeds and land rent. This let Zaw Myo follow a ‘Hotel and Gastronomy’ course at CVT college. His dream was to become a chef, and now he is

indeed working as a chef in a restaurant chain in Yangon.

The family’s neighbours expressed amazement at his progress: “I never thought this boy could get a good job”; “How did he change?”; “His style became smarter and more lovely unlike before.”

Zaw Myo Oo said: “I have many things to learn. I hope to open my own restaurant one day, and be such a boy that other NFE children will be inspired to improve themselves. I want to tell you my many thanks to S4SK and all teachers who supported me to reach this stage.”

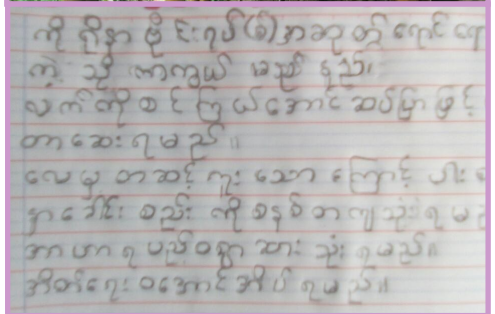


Social work and response to COVID-19:

Because they are so poor, our families are vulnerable on a number of fronts, and we have found that social work to help resolve difficulties as they arise, helps avoid students having to drop out to help at home or earn more money. The arrival of the pandemic has presented us with new challenges. Aye Aye Thinn (Programme Director, H4SS) writes:

“COVID-19 reached Myanmar in March. We were quick to alert parents and children to the seriousness of the problem. We showed video clips of handwashing, and teachers worked with students to make posters for community awareness. The Government ordered schools and Universities to close on 24th March, so our staff and teachers worked mostly from home from about that date. Senior staff met twice per week to check challenges faced by teachers and families, and to be able to adjust our strategy in a timely manner.

Teachers visited students' homes (2 or 3 homes per day on average) to monitor their situation, give encouragement, and guide them in self-learning. They prepared worksheets, and left books along with questions to encourage comprehension and writing skills.



“How to prevent COVID-19?
Must wash our hands carefully.
Must wear the mask systematically because it can spread in the air.
Must eat nutritious food.
Must sleep for enough hours.”

Phyu Hninn Wai (14 years)





Students were encouraged to write essays about their current situation.

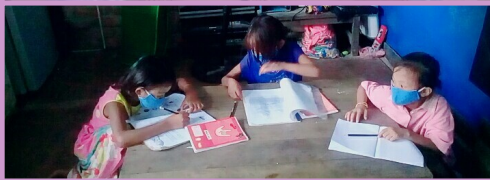
Our families are really poor, living day to day, and many could not work at this time, so we provided a food and hygiene hamper to each family (top left). We help those in need from the social work fund.

Since 5th May, to reduce possibility of transmission, we have run the office in shifts, with those who can working at home. In July, we did our year-end assessment of students, some with the home visit, and others in class with 3 or 4 students each time.

We are arranging to run all classes in 3 shifts per day, so that students can following the social distancing rule, wear masks and wash hands, and will provide extra hand-washing basins and soap for each class.

One class is making hand gel and we will share the technique to all classes and provide some investment.

Our Sewing and Tailoring students in Pakkoku, Bago and at the Learning Centre have made more than 1,000 masks which we are distributing to all children.



Computer class: With computing equipment donated by Burmese Community Development Collaboration, and in cooperation with local NGOs, we helped establish computer skills classes in 7 townships, along with a class at the Learning Centre, for altogether 168 students (77 boys, 91 girls). The focus is on developing familiarity with programmes that will be of help to students as they enter the jobs market. The Learning Centre class was taught by our Project Manager, Phyo Thandar Aye, and her husband, with an English class in parallel.



Messages from H4SS:

Aye Aye Thinn (Programme Director): Our children's families are truly marginalized by illiteracy. We have a successful strategy to address their economic situation, and improve their lives. However, there is no magic way to bring change, particularly in the midst of the pandemic. Anyway, we will keep fighting for the continuing education and good careers of very poor children. For many, it is their last chance.

Myint Myint Swe (Advisory Board [AB] Member): H4SS is a local NGO in Myanmar providing educational opportunity to out of school children and supporting their social needs. Parents and community engage actively in the project activities. Year by year, the work has grown systematically thanks to great leadership and management. I really appreciate their hard work, and especially for giving food and soap to each and every family during COVID 19.

Daw Khin Toe (AB Member): We have consultation among the members to shape the organization's vision, mission and policies. Collaboration with the community is very important and we really tried to achieve it. I will keep working for poor children in this way because it is a virtue.

U Maung Myint (AB Member): I wish H4SS develop more and more to be able to support for those children better and better. Accordingly, I also send my loving-kindness to the mother organization, S4SK, which encourages H4SS, for more success and more supporting for the children.

Dear Friend and Supporter,

Thank you for your support over the past year. These are uncertain times for us all, and especially for the poor and disadvantaged. S4SK has been responding to problems from its beginning, and we continue to do so now, adjusting practices so as to continue to provide quality education and social care to families, while keeping staff safe.

S4SK is a small charity. Apart from the costs of our appeal, all admin costs at S4SK, including travel, are covered by donation from the trustees, so you can be sure that nearly everything (roughly 98%) of your donation will go to the work you see here. Please help us to bring hope to the lives of disadvantaged children.

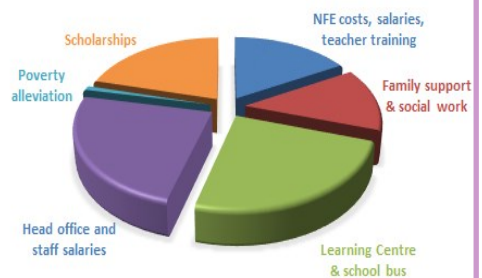
In friendship,



John McConnell (Managing Trustee, S4SK)

In 2019-20, S4SK raised £72,839 from trusts, individuals and Quaker meetings. The sum of £63,113 was spent on the work you see here, and £455 on fundraising and bank charges. To guarantee **continuity of classes from year to year we retain 10 months operating costs in reserve** (£63,807 on 01.04.2020). Designated expenditure for 2019-20 is currently £65,000. Full accounts are available on the Charity Commission website, or from the treasurer.

HOW H4SS SPENT OUR DONATION



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:

☐ I want to Gift Aid my donation of £_____ to: Scholarships for Street Kids. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

☐ I am happy to receive further information relating to the work of S4SK

☐ I am happy to receive information sent to my email address:.....

S4SK is a UK registered charity, No: 1131559. We will process your personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018. Our Privacy Policy is available from the Treasurer.

Name:

Address:

.....Postcode:.....

Please return to: Erica Cadbury, Treasurer, S4SK, 72 Sun Street, Haworth, Keighley, BD22 8AH
email: s4skfinance@gmail.com