

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Building
Community
Resilience



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VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Our Vision

A just, equitable and sustainable world in which every person enjoys the right to a life of dignity, freedom from poverty and all forms of oppression.

Our Mission

To achieve social justice, gender equality, and poverty eradication by working with people living in poverty and exclusion, their communities, people's organisations, activists, social movements and supporters.

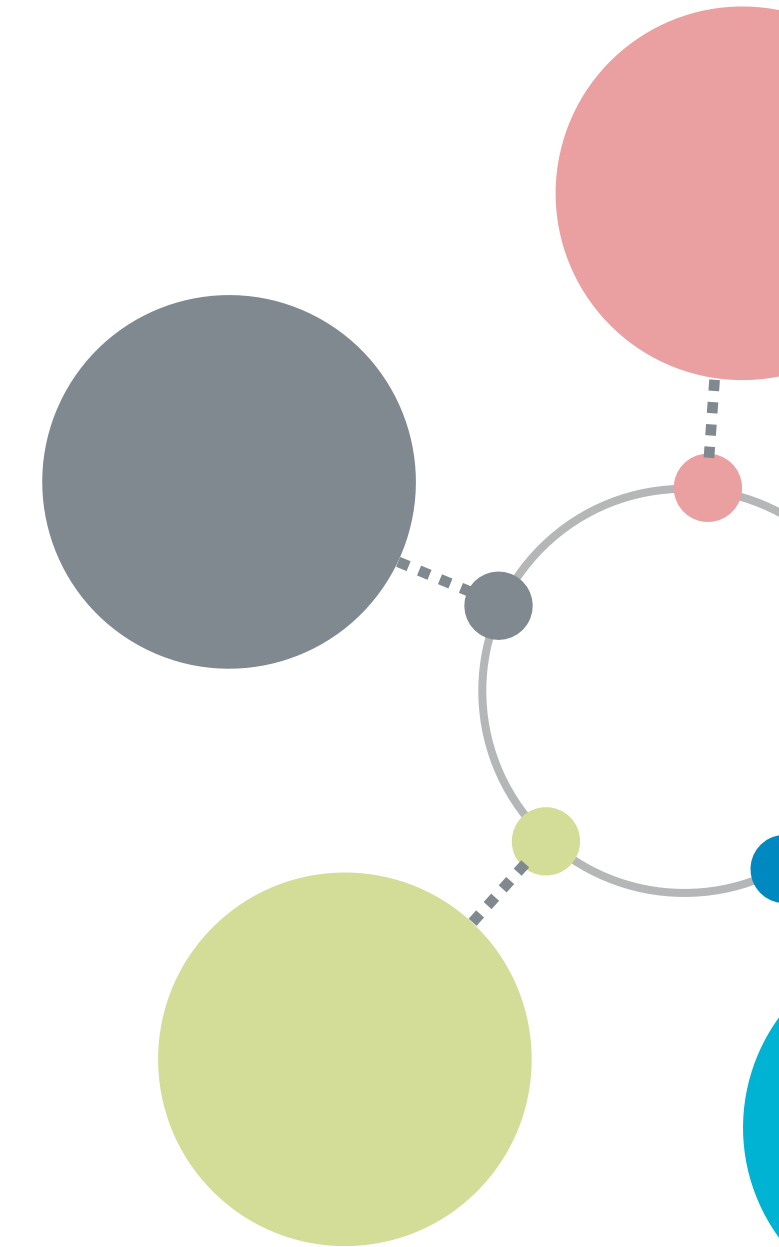
Our Values

- Mutual Respect
- Equity and Justice
- Integrity
- Solidarity with the people living in poverty and exclusion
- Independence
- Courage and Conviction
- Humility

The ActionAid Federation has committed to applying a feminist lens and values in our work which will guide us in interpreting and advancing our mission.

ACRONYMS

AAI	ActionAid International
AAM	ActionAid Myanmar
CBO	Community Based Organisation
VCBO	Village Community Based Organisation
CBT	Community Based Tourism
CRC	The Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
GAD	General Administration Department
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GP / GPM	Global Platform / Global Platform Myanmar
HLDO	Hualngo Local Development Organisation
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
LDN	Local Development Network
LIFT	Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund
LRP	Local Rights Programme
MCCR	Myanmar Consortium for Community Resilience
MoHS	Ministry of Health and Sports
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
PRRP	(AAM's annual) Participatory Review and Reflection Process
PWF	Planet Wheeler Foundation
SHG / WSHG	Self Help Group / Women's Self-Help Group
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WDMC	Ward Disaster Management Committee



COUNTRY DIRECTOR FOREWORD

2020 has been an unprecedented year for all of us. As individuals, families, communities, nations and organisations, we have all had to deal with the challenges of the global pandemic.

Early in the year, back when we still had so much to learn about the nature of the disease, despite a smattering of cases, it appeared that Myanmar had been spared the worst. However, by August, the virus began to prove otherwise. By this point community transmission was on the rise and strict 'stay at home' orders were put in place by authorities.

Throughout the year Myanmar faced a double crisis of both Covid and its economic impacts. Border closures and travel restrictions put an end to international tourism and slowed exports in key industries like the garment sector to a near standstill. National and local lockdowns and closures of shops, restaurants and other businesses slashed family incomes. On UNDP study estimated that Myanmar's poverty had risen from 25% in 2017 to 50% by the end of 2020. Those in more precarious situations – workers in the informal economy, casual labourers, factory workers – unsurprisingly felt this most acutely.

As a feminist organisation we watched with grave concern as the impacts were shouldered disproportionately by women and girls. Women make up the bulk of the workforce in the garment sector, for example, and so were immediately hit the hardest when factories lost orders and began to close. We also saw concerning spikes in domestic violence.

In spite of all these challenges, I have been able to take heart from the way that ActionAid Myanmar staff, our partners and the communities we work with have responded. It has been awe-inspiring to see the mobilisation and initiative shown in the face of such an enormous challenge. Existing projects, programmes and contracts have been rapidly renegotiated in a spirit of collaboration – re-focused on the most pressing needs in each of the communities we work within. We have seen ActionAid Fellows helping to deliver PPE in their villages; entrepreneurial groups of women making and selling facemasks; children enabled to borrow books to read at home while schools remain closed; young people discussing the mental health impacts of Covid; and of course, distribution of food, water and financial support to those most in need. These are just a few examples of the

adaptations and initiative shown in the report that follows.

ActionAid Myanmar is a family. Anyone who has been to our office in Yangon prior to 2020 will have observed the community spirit with which we approach all of our work. It is even more remarkable then, that staff teams have achieved a momentous shift in our programme activities often while unable to meet together at the office. I cannot thank them enough for their resilience, fortitude, and commitment to the communities we support, which stands us in good stead for whatever the future holds.

Araddhya Mehtta
Country Director



ABOUT US

OUR COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN






Whilst it continues to provide the long-term strategy for ActionAid Myanmar, 2020 has tested the adaptability of our **2018-2027 Myanmar Country Strategic Plan** to its limits. Nevertheless, we have remained focused on our key programme priorities: the realisation of rights; redistribution of power and resources; and the resilience of people and communities.

Set out below under each of our main areas of work it is possible to see how each of these long-term programme priorities are embedded within all our activities.

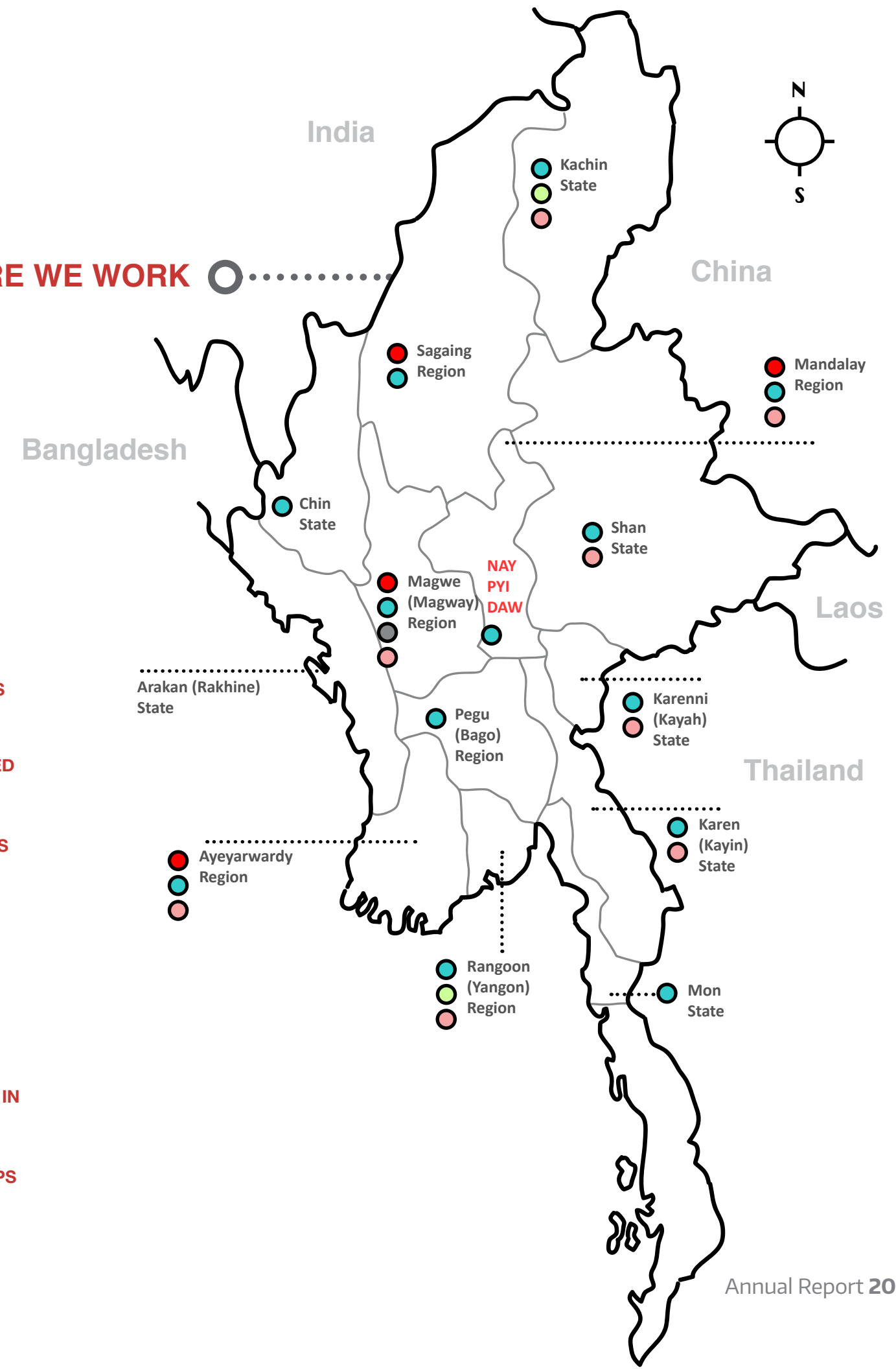
OUR WORK IN 2020

This Annual Report outlines key achievements of ActionAid Myanmar in each of the following areas of activity:

Through our activities under each of these themes we have responded to the impact of the global pandemic whilst remaining true to our long-term programme goals. In 2020

-  **Women's Rights**
-  **Child Sponsorship**
-  **Governance and Youth**
-  **Social Enterprise**
-  **Resilience**

WHERE WE WORK



WE HAVE WORKED WITH **44** PARTNERS

DELIVERED **36** PROJECTS

IN **13** STATE & REGIONS

WORKING IN **113** TOWNSHIPS



COUNTRY CONTEXT

2020 was a year with high expectations for Myanmar since the government introduced economic liberalization and reforms during the previous four years. However, the COVID-19 pandemic upended its plans, slowing Myanmar's economic growth to 1.7 percent in fiscal 2019-20 from 6.8 percent in 2018-19, hammering small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the tourism and garment/textile sectors.

The virus was confirmed to have reached Myanmar on 23rd March, however it is likely to have been in circulation undetected much earlier. The government, and local communities themselves, rapidly implemented containment measures and public health responses. It seemed that Myanmar would escape the worst of the pandemic, and by May/June restrictions were beginning to be relaxed, until new variants of the virus arrived in August.

By late 2020, the country had experienced one of the most severe COVID-19 outbreaks in Southeast Asia.

Myanmar's vulnerability to the pandemic was high due to its weak healthcare infrastructure especially in conflict affected areas where COVID-19 restrictions reinforce issues of poor access to basic services,

livelihoods, and food security. Factors such as a lack of testing resources and services and fears of stigma in crowded camps was likely contributing to severe underreporting of COVID-19 cases among IDP populations. The poorest and most marginalised communities in the camps and in informal settlements, living closely together and lacking access to healthcare and sanitation, were particularly vulnerable.

The pandemic has also greatly disrupted the country's economy. Many poor households are especially exposed to the effects of the COVID-19 crisis due to job insecurity, employment in the informal sector, and low savings. One UN report¹ estimated that the poverty rate in Myanmar was as high as 50% by the end of the year. Another study² found 66% of families surveyed in the rural dry zone had income under the \$1.90/day poverty line.

¹ In 2017, Myanmar's poverty rate was approximately 24.8%. By December 2020, the second wave of COVID-19 was estimated to bring the poverty rate to almost 50%. UNDP (2021) Covid-19, Coup D'Etat and Poverty. https://www.asia-pacific.undp.org/content/dam/rbap/docs/Research%20&%20Publications/democratic_governance/UNDP-RBAP-COVID-19-Coup-d-Etat-and-Poverty-Impact-on-Myanmar-2021.pdf

² International Food Policy Research Institute (2020) COVID-19 second wave in Myanmar causes dramatic increases in poverty. <https://phys.org/news/2020-11-covid-myanmar-poverty.html>

The community level response to Covid-19, in spite of the acute challenges facing so many, has been impressive, and reminiscent of the mobilisation of resources and people-power seen back in 2008 in the wake of Cyclone Nargis. Donations of food and cash have been organised, neighbourhood watches organised, protective equipment procured, and so on. Collective community responsibility has been in evidence across the country. National and local civil society and community-based organisations have been able to rapidly pivot their focus onto supporting people through the pandemic – and as the following pages show, ActionAid Myanmar has also risen to that challenge with the support of our partners and our donors.

Distribution of Covid-19 prevention materials and pamphlets in a crowded wet market in Dala township together with MCCR Myanmar Consortium for Community Resilience (MCCR) and PRUDENCE



RESPONDING TO THE PANDEMIC - IN NUMBERS

1.3 million

1.3 million viewers were reached with a series of four webinars featuring mental health experts exploring some of the main psychological impacts of COVID-19 on youth (since translated into Mon, Karen and Mizo Chin languages).

1,675,135

1,675,135 (51% are women) people benefitted from distribution of basin, cash and Covid-19 prevention items

2,525,999

2,525,999 (54% are women) people reached through online webinars on GVB during Covid-19 pandemic

417

417 people (99% are women) received vocational trainings on face mask making, sewing and snack making

2 million

2 million young viewers online between the ages of 18 and 34, primarily across Yangon, Mandalay, Mawlamyine, Taunggyi and Myitkyina were reached with a month-long awareness campaign looking at how COVID-19 has impacted gender-based violence (GBV) in Myanmar.

571

571 people (73% are women) received GBV awareness knowledge and Covid-19 supplies

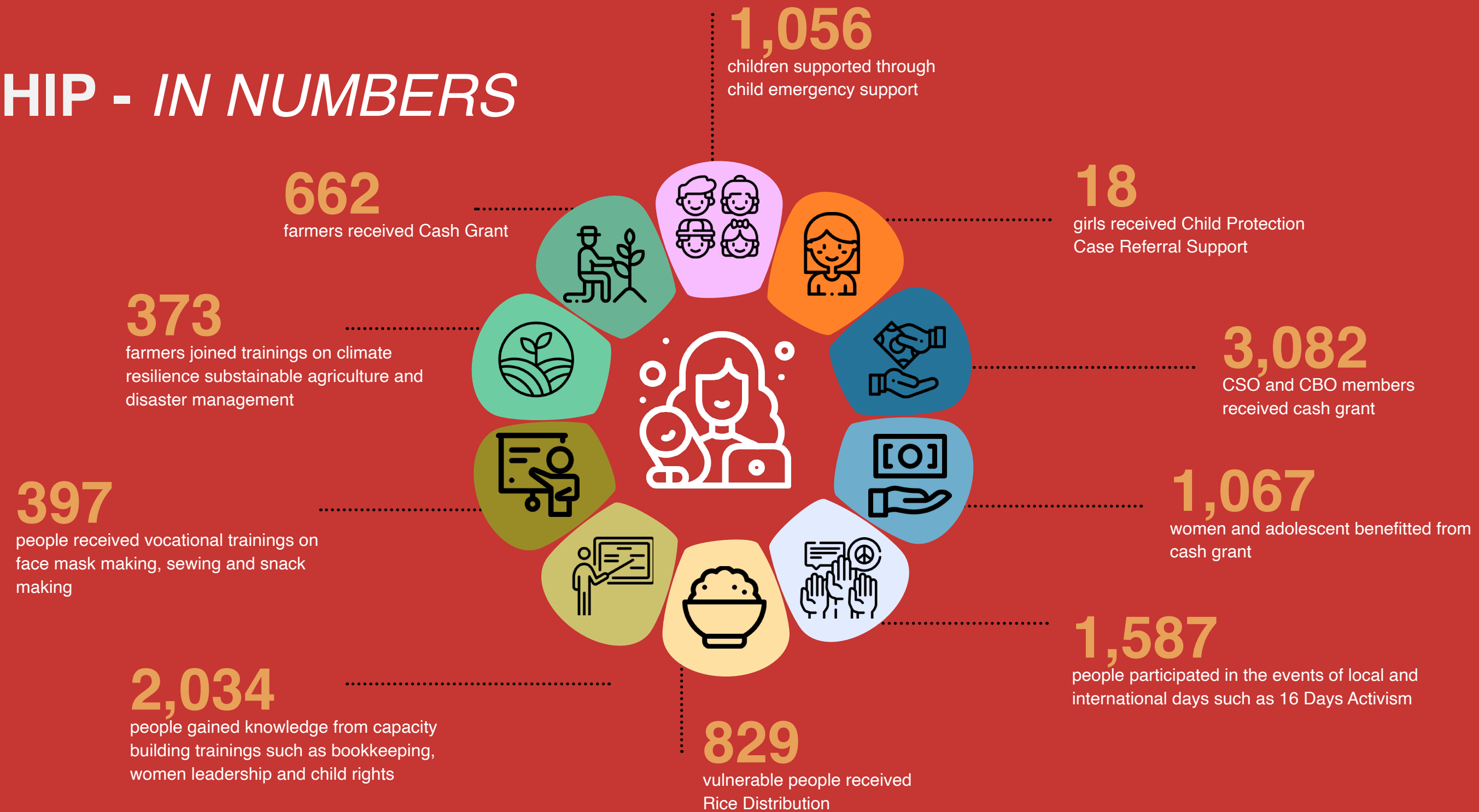
10,000

10,000 workers (female 9,000, male 1,000) were provided with COVID-19 kits including hand sanitizers, gloves and masks to workers in Hlaingtharyar, Dagon Myothit-Seikkan and Dagon Myothit-South townships.

10,000

10,000 pamphlets and posters on COVID-19 prevention measures which covered topics such as COVID-19 symptoms, prevention strategies and information regarding home quarantine were provided in

CHILD SPONSORSHIP - *IN NUMBERS*



Child Sponsorship is a core element of ActionAid's funding strategy. Including all CS related Regular Giving products, CS provides for around 50% of the organization's total income globally and funds more of our programme work than any other income stream. Child Sponsors are present in 9 out of 12 Funding Affiliates and is operational in 33 country programmes, Child Sponsorship unit holds accountability to both ends – to the supporters and to the children and village communities. CS aims to empower the village whilst ensuring that the support to the sponsored children is core to the programming. The Local Rights Programme is established through the CS funds. Through our CS we were able to support a range of activities in response to Covid 19 in coordination with the Ministry of Health department. This included raising awareness around Covid-19 prevention and response financial support to families those lost job opportunities and struggled for daily food, providing fund for livelihood activities, provided basic food needs to families with children, supported child focus activities and responded to child emergencies as they occurred through the child emergency fund.

Our **local rights programmes (LRPs)** are human rights focused and emphasise the roles of women and youth in communities. AAM works through our LRPs over a 10-year commitment with 183 communities in the following townships:

- LRP 1: Pyapon in Ayeyarwaddy;
- LRP 2: Meikhtila township in Mandalay;
- LRP 3: Patheingyi West, Patheingyi and Ngaputaw township in Ayeyarwaddy;
- LRP 4: Mying township in Magway region;
- LRP 5: Sarlingyi township in Sagaing region; and,
- LRP 6: Pakokku township in Magway region.

The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly impacted livelihoods, incomes and job opportunities and created a new fear of infection amongst all communities. AAM has successfully supported basic food distribution in an effort to alleviate immediate needs. Different food items were distributed in different LRP areas, depending on the needs of the community

living there. Providing basic foods had eased the anxiety of the most affected households in the development area/LRPs, with a total of over 10,000 households supported. Women's groups were given mask making training, and were subsequently able to make masks needed for villages as well as sell them on to other villages, providing a source of income.

Books were provided for child clubs/groups in some LRPs (LRP1,2,4,5 & 6) tables and chairs provided for reading and painting in LRP 3. AAM supported 2 masks per each child in all LRPs. made more nature promoting Perhaps a of such good practice promotion at the end of 2020 Activities were adapted in the face of the pandemic too: ae, and dbeing , that and read at home.



•••••
The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) day celebration in Patheingyi



•••••
Child message collection activities in LRP3



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Child message collection activities in LRP3

Case Story 1: Supporting community self-help and women's entrepreneurship

Naw Hae Nay Htoo is a 41-year-old woman who lives in Pathein township in Ayeyarwaddy region. She has seven family members including her three sons and two daughters. Her youngest son was part of AAM's child sponsorship programme.

All family members work as casual and daily labourers, working long hours and exposing them to risk such as malaria. As a result, Naw Hae Nay Htoo was unable to participate in social activities of her village and limited in her time and income to support and supervise her children's education. Eventually, however, she became a member of self-help group implemented by LRP 3. She received Myanmar traditional snack making and soap making courses. After completion of soap making training, she continues making soap and sells it to make income for her family.

A loan provided by the Women's Self-help Group (WSHG) has enabled the family to afford a female pig, and to raise piglets for sale. Similarly, as part of WSHG's cattle farming program supported by LRP 3 in her village, Naw Hae Nay Htoo bought a female cow. She owns two cows now since her female cow gave birth to a calf. These

business initiatives led by Naw Hae Nay Htoon and supported by ActionAid have greatly improved the food security of her family.

And whilst things were improving, she is also able to access additional support to reduce vulnerability to any other shocks and stresses: "Additionally, I receive nutritious food such as vermicelli, oil, peas, and nonfood item such as soaps for my children from LRP 3 project. These food items are not only nutritious for the

Ma Naw Hae Nay Htoo tends cattle in the neighborhood of her village



children but also reduce family expenses for food. I feel that LRP 3 project is very supportive for rural households. And it is my responsibility to maintain the support for the long-term sustainability of our family. I wish to share individual farming methods and technics to the families who need livelihood support in the future too," said Naw Hae Nay Htoo.

Case Story 2: Income for housewives during COVID-19 pandemic



Ma Lae Swe sewing three-layer cloth mask at her home

Ma Lae Swe lives in a village in Myaing Township, Magway region. She is married and has three children, the eldest being in grade 10. The school is still closed due so he is helping his parents at home. Their older daughter is an elementary school student and their youngest daughter is at the age for kindergarten.

Ma Lae Swe said "My husband worked as a driver previously, earning approximately 300,000 kyats per month, which could cover living costs of our family before the pandemic. But now, we face challenges for daily family expenses. My son and I are working as a daily labourers harvesting sesame and picking peanut. But it is not

raining well this year. Because of this, the farmers do not earn much money from the same crops as in previous years and cannot hire as many daily workers. My husband has been receiving medical treatment and I borrow money from others to buy medicines and pay for medical consultation fees. I am in debt and must pay it back.

"Fortunately, ActionAid provided three-layered face mask sewing training to women from 30 villages in project area. The training intended to get income for women during Covid 19 pandemic. I was selected to join the face mask making training. Two

women groups, each consists of 15 women participated in cloth mask making training. After attending the training, ActionAid Myanmar supported 1,000,000 kyats per each women group. The women group members used that money to buy fabric and required materials to make three-layered face mask. After sewing training, we started sewing cloth masks and sell them. The women group members could produce much more than they expected and I was able to make 103 face masks. ActionAid Myanmar bought 3,200 pieces of three-layer cloth mask made by the women groups initially. We also sell them to the other villages.

"We were continuing sewing cloth face mask activities in our women group to increase our family income. We also distributed masks to children between 2 to 18 years old from the 30 villages. I am very thankful to ActionAid for giving great opportunities, to generate income for us and provide face masks to our children."



GOVERNANCE AND YOUTH - *IN NUMBERS*



57737

youths reached through talk show on Myanmar youth policy



2525999

people reached through online webinars on GVB during Covid-19 pandemic



199

people joined CSOs Platform Meeting



1317145

people reached through APKM Digital Talk Show episodes on LGBTQI, Art & community



1,675,135

people benefitted from distribution of basin, cash and Covid-19 prevention items



1120

people recieved capacity building trainings on case story writing, DRR and gender awareness



2268

members of CBO and CSO received grant



2223

youths joined campaigns and debates on environmental justice and climate change



224

attended indigenous assistant teachers TOT training



92

people received trainings on basic human rights and cultural pluralism



EMPOWERING CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN SOUTHEAST MYANMAR

In this project supported by the Planet Wheeler Foundation (PWF), six civil society organisations mainly from northern Kayin were supported to build their capacity, and their capacity to work together through the Thandaunggyi township CSO network. AAM provided financial support, alongside mentoring and guidance on proposal writing and organizational policy development. Grants were provided for a range of community development activities. These included trainings on leadership, conflict resolution training; land law and registration, prevention of gender discrimination, disaster risk reduction and civic rights. Other projects supported through subgrants included working on environmental issues such as water source conservation through environmental awareness; promoting Karen ethnic language teaching; distribution of Covid-19 precaution materials; and community development through bottom-up planning and township planning.



• Workshop on Environmental Conservation in Thandaunggyi as part of PWF project



• Sagaw Karen Indigenous Assistant Teacher (TOT) training in Thandaung town, PWF project

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY LED DEVELOPMENT IN KAYAH STATE

2020 marked our final year working on a project with ActionAid Fellow-led organisation Local Development Network (LDN). This project was aimed to empower not only the local partner organisation's development, but also support development of village tract level community-based organisations (VTCBOs) in Demoso and Hpruso Townships. Participatory research based on this project (and another in Chin State) began in January 2020, and completed with the support of a research team made up of researchers from the partner organisation. Research training and case story writing training were provided to field staff before data collection, and there were meetings to validate the data after the field research was completed. The findings of the study supported this model of community-led work as an important part of developing future local governance models, as partners were increasingly able to advocate for their project activities and village development priorities to government departments and decision-makers, most notably to hundreds of visitors to the 68th anniversary of Kayah Day showroom exhibition in January 2020.



• VCBO committee members are trying for their VCBO's center building, LDN



• VCBOs Area Platform Workshop in Kayah, LDN

BUILDING RESILIENCE IN CHIN STATE THROUGH CHANGEMAKERS

National Youth Forum and CSOs engagement meeting in Naypyidaw in February 2020 was joined by the partner Hualngo Land Development Organization (HLDO) staff and 2 fellows from this project. Young people across the country discussed about the Union's youth policy and implementation, youth and peace movements, challenges in funding for youth policy implementation. CSOs shared their experiences of government's restrictions to CSOs on operational and access based, freedom of assembly and expression and campaigns for citizen rights. These issues were also highlighted through panel discussions and debates. Union Social Welfare Minister gave feedbacks on CSO's presentation and statement and also shared the commitment to support civil society. In the conference, fellows had a chance to share the process related to developing village action plan and ways in which they were able to work collectively for local sustainable development. Key lessons

were around collective action and collective ownership of action plans to build a joined vision for change at the local grassroots level. The biggest benefit from this CSOs engagement meeting was that the partner could submit 40 villages' traditional land use mapping to the Union government.

Changemakers' cluster meetings were conducted 10 times by separating into groups as following Covid-19 restriction. Village book editing and translating process into Chin languages were also conducted. Child spaces could also be formed in all targeted villages. Seed grants were also provided to 24 villages per proposal. Coordination meeting of the partner with VCBO leaders, WSHG leaders and village administrators from 40 targeted villages conducted in March 2020 in Rih Town was successful to discuss drawing land mapping for community's customary land practice for livelihood. Situation of village development plan implementation progress and challenges was also shared. VCBOs and WSHGs were inspired to hear the project's goal and objectives to contribute to their long-term vision and mission achievement. Coffee seeds were distributed to participants for their respective community coffee farm in the end.

GLOBAL PLATFORM

Additionally, Global Platform (GP) funded by ActionAid Denmark is a worldwide network of training hubs for empowerment and activism. Its primary objective is to provide innovative training and capacity building for youth organisations and young people who wish to take positive action in their societies. The Global Platform Myanmar (GPM) has been present since 2012 under Governance and Youth programme. In July 2019, GPM launched a Youth Hub by inviting different youth-led organisations. GPM also organized activities such as youth-led Covid-19 emergency response in Kachin state, Mandalay and Magway regions, awareness talk on reducing discrimination against women, feminism leadership training, advocacy and campaign workshop on gender equality and so on.

CONTINUING ENGAGEMENT IN UPLANDS MYANMAR

In 2020, we continued with our six projects in upland areas of Myanmar, including mainly minority ethnic areas of the country plus the southern central part of the country in Bago Region. The main focus areas of these projects are improving livelihoods, women entrepreneurship, civil society strengthening and humanitarian aid work in conflicted affected areas. Through programme using bottom-up participatory processes, AAM works together with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure that there is community ownership of development and humanitarian aid activities.

Feeding chicken in a standard chicken farm in Chin state by HLDO



Distribution of aid in Chin state by HLDO

CULTURAL BRIDGES

As consortium partnership with Phaung Daw Oo Integrated Monastic Education High School (PDO), Kachin Baptist Convention (KBC), Democratic Voice of Burma Association (DVB), Graceworks Myanmar Inc (GWM), Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), Goethe-Institute, this project was started on January 2020. Only the contract amendment to partner with BBC is in the pending process to meet the targeted online audiences. During the inception period, AAM's project team and all partners' project and finance focal persons were made aware and received training on the overview of the action and the relevant financial and contractual requirements of the EU through two inception activities. The AAM team held an internal inception workshop in early March where ActionAid's Grants and Compliance Coordinator from the EU Partnerships Team conducted sessions with the project, finance, and operations teams at AAM, focusing on the EU's Special and General Conditions and mechanisms to ensure effective management of the action. AAM held a series of six inception sessions with the consortium partners which took place online in March-April due to Covid-19 related travel and meeting restrictions.

Inception workshop for Cultural Bridges project in 2020



Inception workshop for Cultural Bridges project in 2020

DIGITAL TALK SHOW: ARLOO PHOTE KYA MAE

In 2019 a youth-led team at ActionAid Myanmar developed a multi-media project to equip youth with the inspiration, support and platform they need in order to take on the issues that are affecting their lives today.

At the centre of the project has been Arloo Phote Kya Mae, a hybrid digital talk show, hosted on Facebook. The show is accompanied by a series of offline events, digital campaigning and ARTivism grants, bringing together art, activism, and a multi-media, multi-platform approach. Designed by a team in-house, we collaborate and co-create with our peers on a range of topics, by listening, connecting, and offering a space where no idea is without merit and young people are empowered to exercise the creative, uninhibited, and fresh thinking that is the signature of youth. The show, and its various campaign activities, acts a one-stop shop - to become informed, to be empowered, to participate, to share and to enact change on their own terms.



ARTivism grants; photography series by a grantee



ARTivism grants: multi-media painting by a grantee

In 2020, we produced six digital talk show episodes looking at: the Elections – The Elections and Ethnic Politics – the Elections and Civil Society – LGBTQI – Gender & Feminism – Art & Community – Culture, Society & Taboo. Featuring a total of 25 guest speakers and hosts, and collaborations with over 10 organizations working on social justice, cultural heritage, and the arts.

Behind-the-scenes photos of APKM team activities

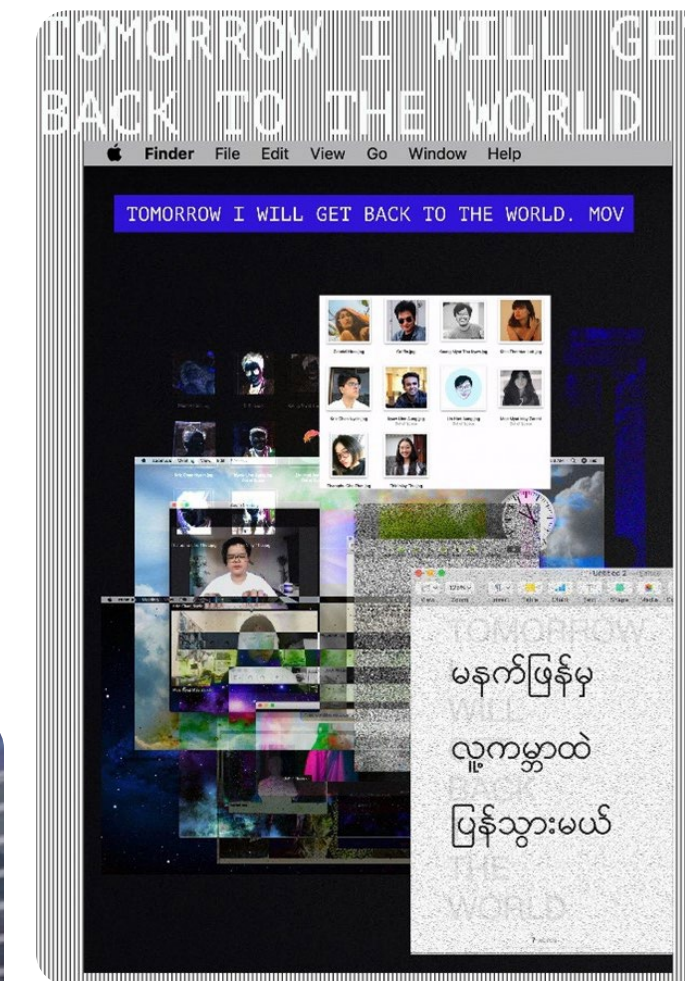


Arloo Photo Kya Mae Digital Talk Show Episode Six: LGBTQI

In May-June 2020, a series of four webinars featuring mental health experts explored some of the main psychological impacts of COVID-19 on youth, as well as identifying the factors that can help the public better understand and collectively combat the negative impacts of COVID-19. The series reached over 1.3 million viewers with 171k engagements, and have since been translated into Mon, Karen and Mizo Chin languages.

In November, we launched a month-long awareness campaign looking at the state of gender-based violence (GBV) in Myanmar, and how the effects of increased digitalization alongside COVID-19 have impacted the situation. We reached just over 2 million young viewers online between the ages of 18 and 34, primarily across Yangon, Mandalay, Mawlamyine, Taunggyi and Myitkyina.

Find out more: <https://www.facebook.com/ArlooPhoteKyaMae>



ARTivism grants: film by a group of grantees which was screened at Wathan Film Festival



Behind-the-scenes photos of APKM team activities

Case Story 1: Empowered Women Leading Local Change

CBO&SHG management training at Doihkhel village. Photo HLDO

Founded in 2015, a women's self-help group founded in a village in Falam Township in Chin State, has been proactive in dealing with a range of local issues important to villagers, whilst also empowering women leadership. Founded with no funding to support their activities, the group began by focusing on the issue of animal muck, which was causing a stink in the village! By discussing the issue with village administrators, youth groups and villagers, solutions were found to provide pigsties for pigs and fencing for cattle, leading to a better village environment for everyone.

In 2016, the group sold donated clothes received from HLDO for half price their normal price, using profits to buy stationery for the group. Members were provided several trainings on issues such as women rights, book-keeping, community-based organisation and management, starting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and disaster risk reduction. Group leader, Daw Mar Ha Yel Ei said, "After we founded the women self-help group, we conducted regular group meetings and we gained more knowledge due to the trainings supported by HLDO. Besides, doing activities together strengthen solidarity and cooperation."

The women self-help group uses their funds to support the needs of the community, such as tables and chairs for schools and teachers' housing, donating trash bins for the village, teaching children to throw litter systematically into the bin and donating loudspeaker for invitations to village events, as well as funding for the community events themselves. The group owns half an acre of coffee farm where they grow seasonal vegetables to sell to the villagers. The group leader explained the role of the group, "With the

existence of WSHG, the village is clean. Vulnerable families can borrow money with small interests from the group", for example. However, even with such great achievements, the group is not resting: "Even though women participating is increasing, I am still not satisfied because conservative customs are still practiced, and I am looking forward to receiving gender-based and women empowerment training from HLDO. I hope women participation will increase if so", the group leader added.



Case Story 2: Changing the perceptions of youth

Youth led Covid-19 responses in Magway region

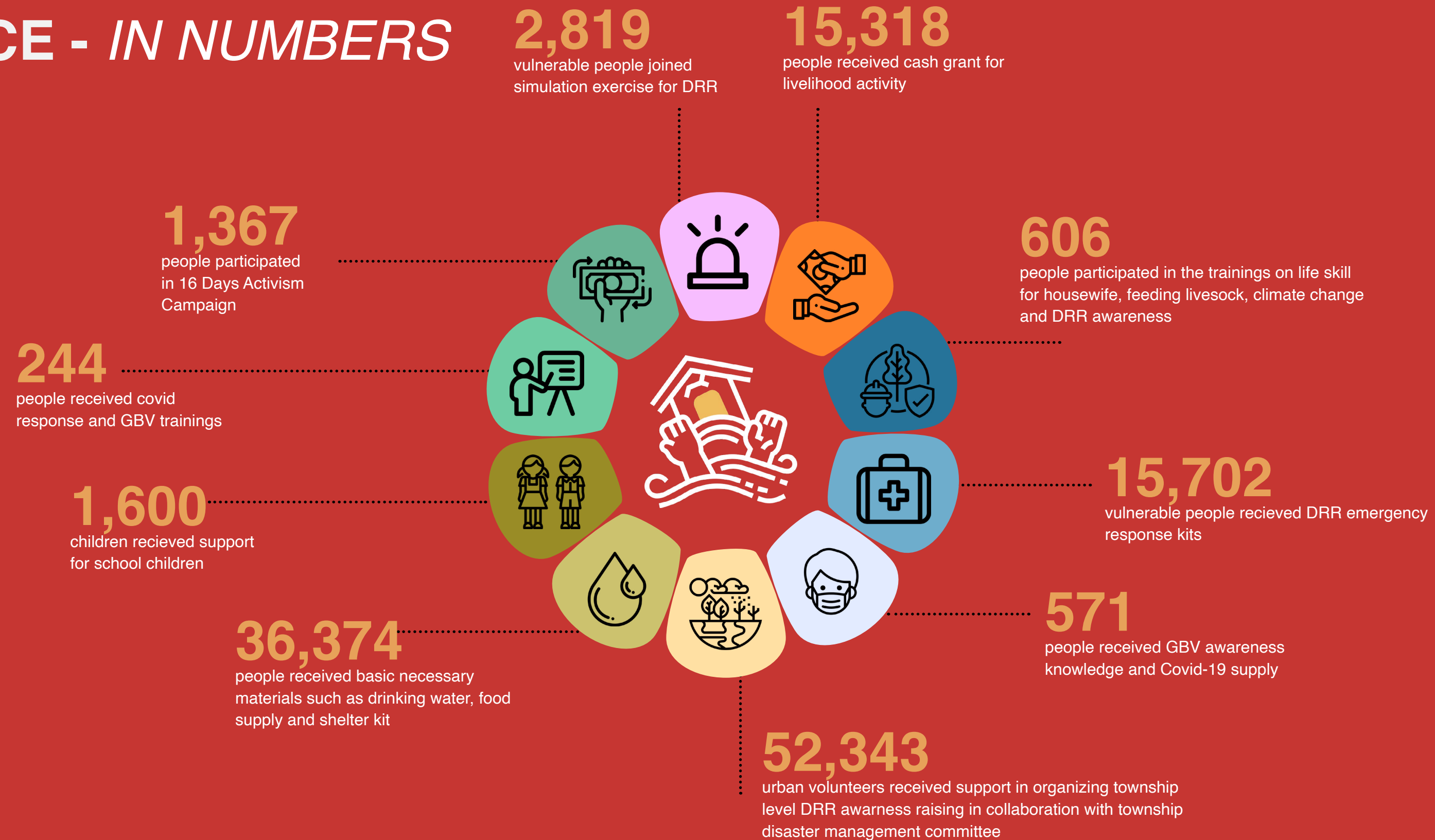
The Secretary of a Township Youth Affairs Committee in Magway Region that has been actively supporting the community through the Covid-19 pandemic, believes that this important work has highlighted the positive role youth can play in local development. For example, the Committee thought carefully about the distribution of PPE, hand sanitizer and other important equipment, to avoid inadvertently increasing risk of infection: "There were no Covid-19 positive patients in our township at that time. I did not know how Covid-19 prevention is managed in other townships. But, I think if one case of Covid-19 is found then anyone or anywhere can be a spreader and it can spread quickly. That's why I did not like to bring things out on the street and distribute them randomly." Solutions were found, in part by developing a constructive relationship with local authorities: "There is a market. So, I consulted with the municipality. We agreed on the distribution of masks. I gave 10 masks to each vendor in the market. The municipality checked whether it was used or not, although the vendors did not want to wear masks.

We also distributed Covid-19 prevention materials to schools. Schools did not have enough disinfectant sprays. Masks were not provided enough for the students. There were requests to donate more if possible". The Secretary reflected on the work of the committee: " Our Covid-19 prevention activities support the community to follow the guidelines and also raised the image of Youth Affairs Committee. Thanks also to ActionAid for their support. It was not easy to do it by ourselves. I got along better with

the government department. As an individual, I must be more disciplined since I am the one who is raising awareness of Covid. It is better for me and better for the environment too. It is recognized by community with the help of Action Aid."



RESILIENCE - IN NUMBERS



BAWA PANN DAING PROJECT

In December 2020, the Bawa Pann Daing Project, a pilot funded by Agence Française de Développement (AFD) that AAM and Green Lotus started in 2017, will come to an end after 3 years. The project aims to improve the living conditions of the inhabitants of a peri-urban informal settlement in Dagon Seikkan Township, Yangon, and create an urban resilience model for Myanmar's precarious settlements, that includes climate & disaster risk mitigation together with socio-economic empowerment interventions. The Ward hosts an estimated 4,200 households (18,000 people), most of the inhabitants' main livelihood is casual labour, and many are migrants from the Ayeyarwady Region. The project provided the opportunity to trial innovative solutions to issues related to sustainable informal housing, access to primary services, preparedness and response to climate-related disasters, alternative livelihood and community engagement.



• Soap and IECs distribution to the most vulnerable people in ward 67 for Covid-19 prevention by Bawa Pann Daing Project



• Demonstrating firefighting as part of disaster risk reduction activities

The main interventions led by AAM during the project included the establishment of a waste management system for the Ward in collaboration with General Administration Department (GAD); the instalment of two firefighting machines to quickly respond to emergencies; and the creation of the Ward Disaster Management Committee (WDMC), which implemented disaster risk reduction activities and Covid-19 response in the area and ensured the presence of disaster risk mitigation processes in the development plans at ward level. The committee was equipped with DRR kits and properly trained on emergency response, particularly on fire hazard. The WDMC promoted the planting of trees in the Ward together with the Forestry Department.

Moreover, the WDMC coordinated a Covid-19 response in the Ward, by providing soap, IECs, and distributing food and drinking water to the most vulnerable households (around 3,000 - 15,000 individuals), becoming the very first responders to the health emergency in area in April 2020.



• Covid prevention (Soap & IEC distribution)



• Food distribution to vulnerable households as part of Covid-19 responses by WDMC

DALA TOWNSHIP COVID-19 RESPONSE WITH MYANMAR CONSORTIUM FOR COMMUNITY RESILIENCE (MCCR) AND PRUDENTIAL MYANMAR

A sharp rise in COVID-19 cases in Myanmar since August 2020, particularly in Yangon made necessary to support the most vulnerable people, such as the ones living in informal settlements and slums in the urban/peri-urban areas of the city. These areas are densely populated with inadequate household water and sanitation, little or no waste management, overcrowded public transport and limited access to formal health care facilities.

In October, a total of 553 Covid-19 patients were diagnosed and 14 quarantine centers were set up in Dala Township using existing infrastructure such as schools, religious halls and other buildings, with 12 reserved for future use.

As part of Myanmar Consortium for Community Resilience (MCCR) and Prudential Myanmar Covid-19 prevention activities, some trainings were conducted

online on implementation of awareness raising Covid-19 prevention campaigns – with information shared by the health department on the virus and psychological support needed during a pandemic. Then, a 10-days Awareness campaign was organized in Dala along with distribution of IECs materials, covering 24 Wards in the township. The campaign was led by 25 urban volunteers together with Township Health Department and Township GAD. Each volunteer was equipped with protective items including face masks, face shield, gloves, PPE. The volunteers were divided in 5 groups, spreading messages and guidelines around Covid-19 prevention and awareness from MoHS with a truck with loudspeakers twice a day and distributing IECs materials in public spaces, including markets, ferry boat, jetty, taxi gate and others. A total of 14,000 IECs were distributed, and an estimated 13,324 community members were reached through the campaign.

Face masks distribution at Dala Jetty as part of Covid-19 response activity



The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) day celebration in Pathein



Distribution of personal protective items in a crowded market of Dala township

HUMANITARIAN AND RESILIENCE PROGRAMME (HARP) FACILITY

In conflict affected areas of Kachin State, the combination of the Covid-19 pandemic and protracted conflict require a new, women-led approach to shift power to local actors who can foster community-based resilience and counter protection risks. Thanks to funding from the HARP facility, ActionAid Myanmar and a range of partners have been working to equip

conflict-affected populations in IDP camps, host communities, villages, resettlement sites and quarantine centres in eastern Kachin State with the resources to build resilience and response to the increased protection, health and food security vulnerabilities arising from the Covid-19 outbreak. This action has two principle, interrelated components:

1. Vulnerable communities are aware and able to respond to health and food security threats posed by Covid-19, including in targeted quarantine centres.
2. A safe and protective environment is sustained for affected populations with a focus on the increased risks posed to women and children.

This action was carried out across 65 IDP camps, quarantine centres, villages and resettlement sites from August to December 2020. So far, this action has reached 1,248 women and 1,219 men through GBV awareness sessions, Covid-19 response, and food security activities.



Life skill training provided by Grip Hands



Gender based violence prevention awareness session



Life skill training provided by Grip Hands

Case Story 1: Voice of Dala community during Covid-19 emergency

Daw Htay Htay is a woman who lives with her husband and son in Dala Township. Currently, Daw Htay Htay sells at the market to earn a living for her family. Her husband was working as a motorcycle taxi. Both her husband and son had to stop working due to the Covid-19 restrictions and lack of job opportunities. About two months ago, she was infected with Covid-19 and received medical treatment before recovering.

When Daw Htay Htay was infected with the virus, she was contacted through the ward administrator and the health workers continued to take care of her needs.

She said: "Dissemination of health information on Covid-19 prevention activities by ActionAid is very effective way and the public has access to real-time information on how to prevent the spread of the disease. I have seen ActionAid team is also distributing leaflets and posters regarding Covid-19 disease prevention in the wards and township. I would like to encourage to distribute more pamphlets to make the information and safety guidelines available to every household. Organizations such as ActionAid could link up with the health department and relevant administrative bodies to contact



Daw Htay Htay, member of Dala community now recovered from Covid-19

the affected people and positive patients and provide the necessary assistance. We also want the dissemination of health education information and the support to the communities in responding to Covid-19 to be continued. Moreover, awareness raising on gender-based violence and domestic violence during the Covid-19 period was also effective."

Case Story 2: Voice of civil society



Civil Society Team

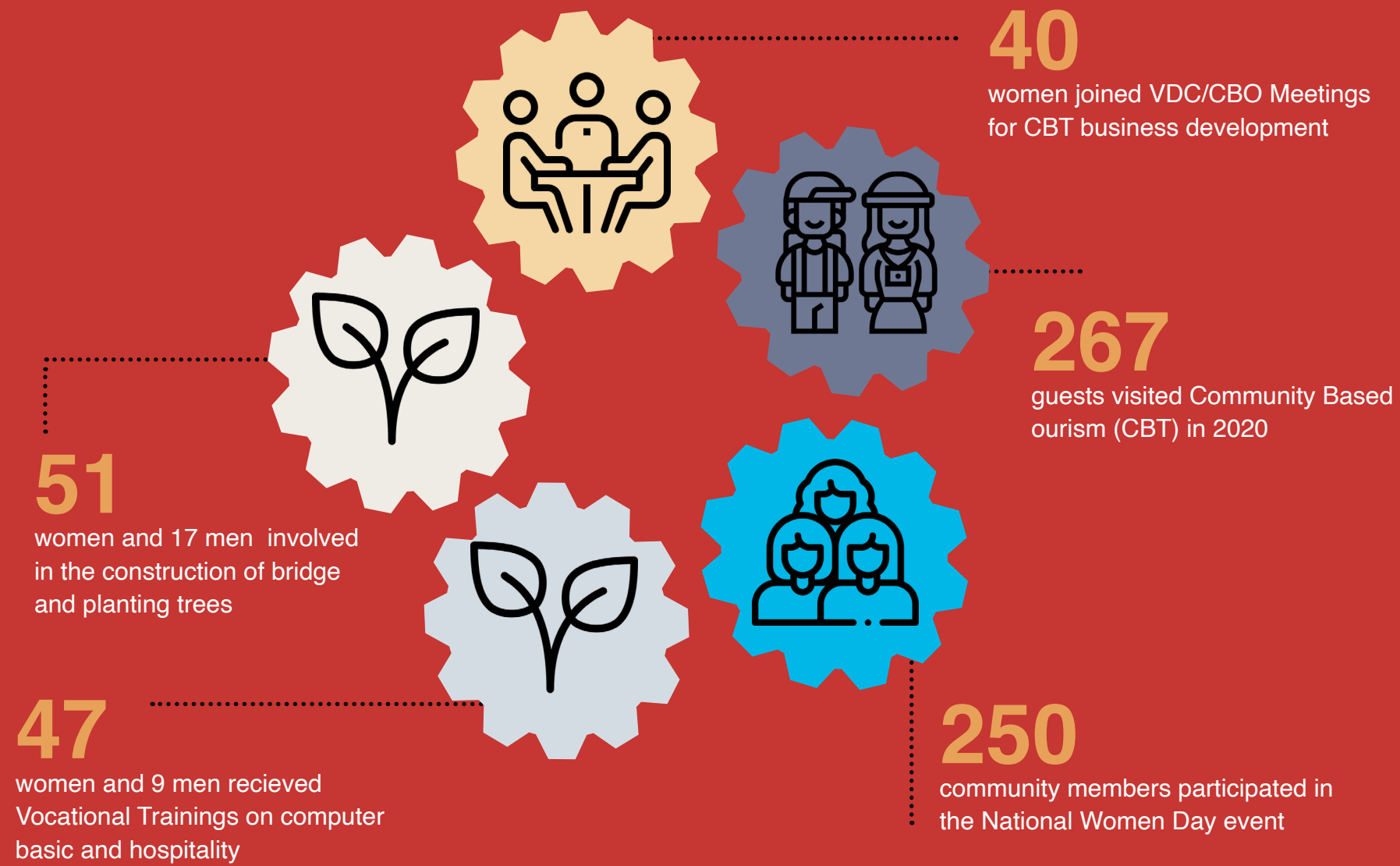
One prominent local civil society organization established in March 2020 started with only 10 members and with 35 lakhs. After almost one year, the organization has double its members (20+) and has an office located in Dala Township where 3 ambulances are on standby. While involved in the prevention of Covid-19, they also perform other charitable activities such as providing food and drinking water to the most vulnerable community members.

The CSO team, which works to prevent Covid-19 disease, was contacted by ActionAid to distribute Covid-19 prevention materials at community level and to health workers and volunteers for the necessary equipment for the prevention of the disease: "PPE suits, hand sanitizers and masks donated by ActionAid were used when transporting Covid-19 patients and distributed to the communities at crowded markets and jetties. Disinfection in villages, wards, quarantine centers and schools has helped to control the disease to

some extent. In Dala Township, ActionAid contributed about 50% of the application of disinfection".

He added that "there are plans to donate water to urban areas where water shortages occur every summer, and with the help of organizations such as ActionAid, we hope to address the issue of water shortages".

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE - IN NUMBERS



In 2015, 4 villages established Myanmar's first Community Based Tourism initiative with the support of ActionAid and Intrepid Foundation. Its objectives were 1) to reduce poverty by diversifying sustainable income source for rural communities through community-based tourism (CBT) and a Community Based University (CBU) and 2) to reduce dependency of the communities on agriculture which is susceptible to the vagaries of nature in the dry zone, the CBT/CBU needs to become sustainable. The CBT project supports farming communities to provide alternative livelihoods as a financial safety net from failing agriculture and income shortage. 1,188 community members from the 4 villages in Myaing directly benefit. The project diversifies community income streams and create job opportunities where women are the primary decision makers. The income of the CBT project is used for the everyday running of a lodge, management fees, and a community development fund. The Myaing community development fund has generated enough funds to help the 4 village communities develop roads, set up electricity poles and cables as well as build libraries since its establishment. In 2020, 267 guests including foreigners, government officials and local guests visited.

The next phase will be crucial for the overall

Community Based Tourism (CBT) guest house in Myaing township



Newly constructed training hall in Myaing CBT

health of running the CBT/CBU, as well as increasing the independence of community members in running the CBT/CBU, and capacity building of the community by AAM for successful handover.

Capacity building on hospitality management, financial management and marketing for business development are still needed to efficiently run and sustain the CBT/CBU business themselves. Knowledge of running operations (HR/Admin/Finance) is currently low and will require training in English, computers and hospitality/marketing (guests, bookings, logistics) over time to help them successfully run the CBT on their own.

Trees plantation program with movie stars and community at CBT



Women from community joining hospitality training



COVID 19 RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

In March 2020, CBT/CBU responses COVID 19 with cloth masks distribution and hand washing basins in 4 villages. Face masks made of cloths are locally produced at the villages in Myaing township, Magway region. More than 20 women attended sewing training and had made 1,500 cloth masks in a short amount of time. All villagers from 4 villages received a free cloth mask each and CBT/CBU committee also educated people to use, wash and dry cloth masks properly to reuse them again. The women committee received job opportunities and people also recognized CBT/CBU committee's great supportive mechanism together with local and international organization at the time they need support.

Women from four villages distributing cloth masks to other villagers



A woman trainee practising sewing at cloth mask making training



Hand washing basin set up by AAM at the entrance of a village



Case Story 1: Women empowerment through community-based tourism

Ma Zin Mar Myint is a CBT/CBU committee member from Kan Gyi Taw (2) village in Myaing Township. She is a mother of 3-year-old daughter.

"I received a job at CBT in the peak time of the season with the arrivals of international visitors and made around 100 USD per month as a regular income. I remember that I spent some of my salary purchasing bricks for the renovation of our house and some for buying food for our family.

"During this COVID 19 period, I have no regular job at CBT to make income as visitors stopped coming here. But I had some temporary jobs at CBT like gardening and cleaning in May and June. Fortunately, my husband can still find job at town as a casual labourer and do masonry work, but income is barely enough to feed the family.

"I have knowledge on how to do some plumbing works. And I can do some hard works like paving road, cleaning up garden, etc. Therefore, I will be able to get a job for the road renovation works at CBT site in September. ActionAid is also

providing zero-interest-loan to our CBT/CBU committee members. I will apply this loan of 1,000 USD to start a small business as it has a big market at this moment of COVID-19. And hope it will help us through our family's economic hardship.

"If we could not find ways to make income, my husband will get exhausted from doing hard work. That can make my husband to be aggressive, drink more alcohol and will lead to domestic violence. Having a paid job for a woman makes good balancing of power and reduces domestic violence. Thanks ActionAid and donors for empowering women and implementing programs through a feminist lens.

"COVID-19 is the most shocking crisis to us. We definitely need your supports to overcome this. Otherwise, the hardship we are facing will be very hard and seems long way to go."



Ma Zin Mar Myint removing the skins of peanuts as part of CBT's cooking activities

Case Story 2: Job opportunity at difficult time

Ko Than Htike is a 32-year-old villager for whom the Covid-19 crisis and unemployment have made his family struggle with everyday life. Six years ago, he went to a jade mining area and, sold journals and vegetables there to make money. After 4 years of working there, he and his wife came back home in 2017 as business was not good there.

Ko Than Htike said, "When we got back from jade mine, my wife became a CBT/CBU committee member and she had the chance to support for cooking and cleaning activities at CBT. But, after a year of work, she quitted from those activities as our two children started going to school and she did not have time to work at CBT /CBU although she got reasonable income from it normally. She has to take care of the two children.

Now she is pregnant with third child, and I need to get a job which can create regular income to take care of our family.

"Physically, my legs are quite weak to walk as I got stroke 4 years ago. Health expenses for myself to recover from stroke, my son's TB disease and my father in law's heart disease spent all money I have saved when I worked at the jade mine. The rice price went up this month as COVID-19

infection becomes everybody's concern these days after seeing some serious news on news media. I have some debt to be settled too. So, I need to have a job to meet family's daily requirement."

Job demand becomes higher as there are less job opportunities and uncertainty of what will happen next due to the COVID-19 impact.

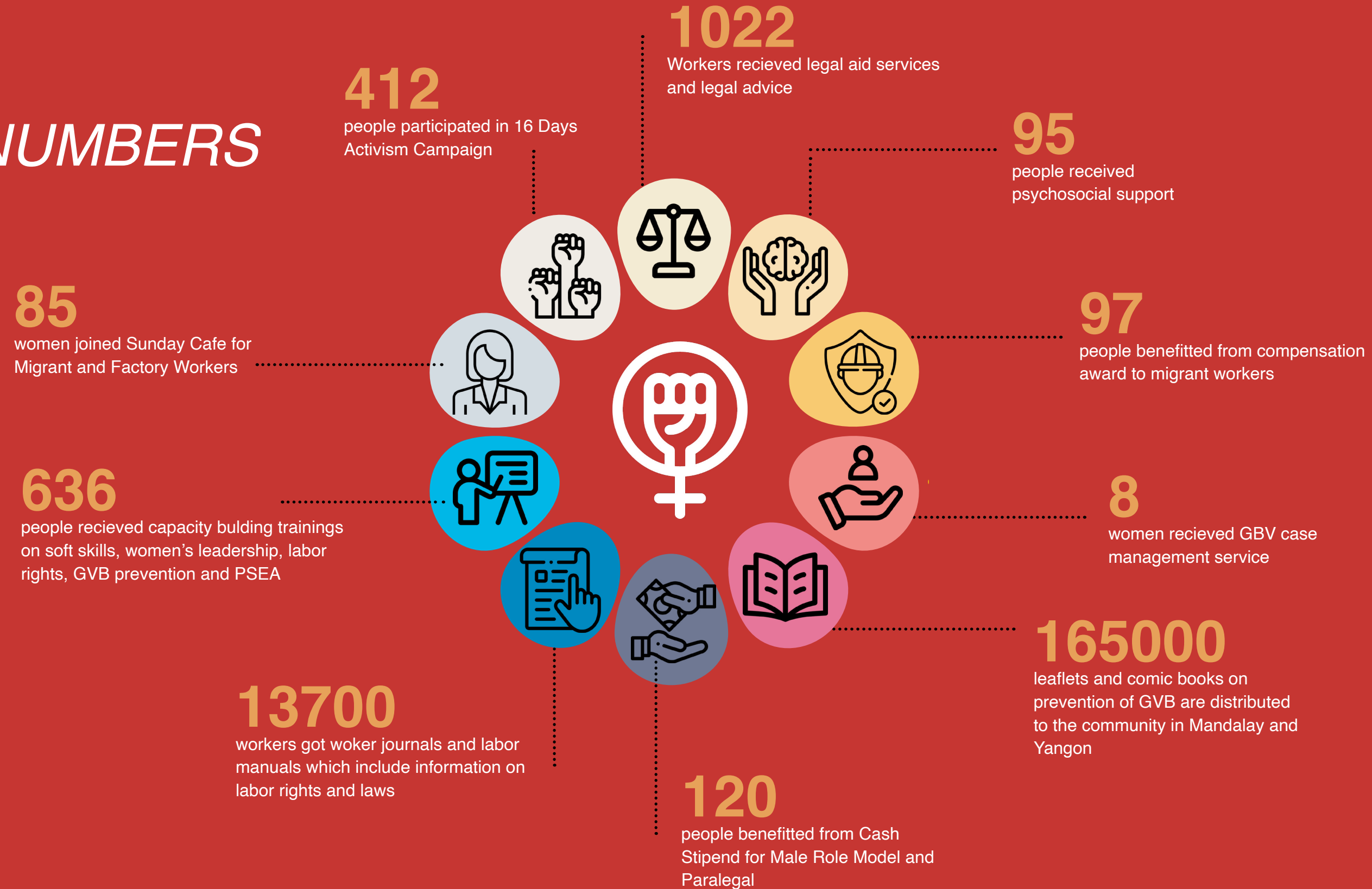
He said, "I really need a job. I know well about water pipe installation and plumber works. If I have a chance to learn something, I want to learn how to drive backhoe machine and motor car because I think this job will help me get better income and it is also suitable with my weakness in legs.

"Everybody in village is concerning for job opportunities and they heard CBT/CBU is offering jobs for both women and men at construction, cooking and cleaning activities and providing capacity building trainings. We are excited about it and willing to join trainings too if applicable. My education level is 7th standard (junior high school)."



Ko Than Htike working in a construction site

WOMEN'S RIGHTS - IN NUMBERS



SAFE MIGRATION FOR DECENT WORK IN PERI-URBAN AREAS OF YANGON (SECURE) – LIFT

One of the sectors hugely impacted by the pandemic in Myanmar was the garment factory sector where approximately 80% of the employees are women. Supply chain disruptions due to COVID-19 resulted in a reported 75% decline in orders leaving many garment workers unemployed. Those that were still employed were at risk due to unsatisfactory working conditions. During this time, AAM worked in partnership with trade unions and civil society and conducted several activities to support the garment factory workers in a project named SECURE which was funded by LIFT.

Activity 1: Legal support to migrant workers: SECURE project provided legal assistance to 670 beneficiaries (female-593, male-77) in gender-based violence (GBV) and labor dispute related cases via 24-hour legal advice hotline as well as in-person support.

Activity 2: Provision of thermometers to rural health centers: The government counterparts approached ActionAid to provide thermometers in Hlaing Thar Yar township, Yangon Region and Pyapon township, Ayeerwady region. With provided thermometers, a total of 15,000 community members were served during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

Activity 3: Food assistance to unemployed migrant workers: Since many migrant workers lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they faced a number of challenges in supporting themselves including not being able buy essential food items. SECURE supported those who had abruptly and unfairly lost their jobs through the provision of food assistance - 5 days' worth of rice - to 1000 workers (female 860, male 140).

Activity 4: Distribution of COVID-19 kit including hand sanitizers, gloves and masks to workers in Hlaingtharyar, Dagon Myothit-Seikkan and Dagon Myothit-South township: SECURE project provided 10,000 beneficiaries (female 9,000, male 1,000) with the aforementioned COVID-19 protection materials.

Activity 5: Facilitating the formation of COVID-19 response coordination committee- During the initial stage of the COVID-19 pandemic, SECURE project facilitated the formation of COVID-19 Response Coordination Committee in Hlaingtharyar Township. The committee included different stakeholders (female-3, male-10) such as the township general administrative department, township health department, local NGOs (red cross), CSO (emergency ambulance services) and trade unions.



Cash assistance to unemployed workers by a partner organization

Hand gel distribution by a partner organization



Activity 6: COVID-19 pandemic preparedness information campaign in industrial zones:

SECURE project successfully designed and distributed 10,000 pamphlets and posters on COVID-19 prevention measures which covered topics such as COVID-19 symptoms, prevention strategies and information regarding home quarantine.

Activity 7: Volunteer training for COVID-19 response volunteer group to support Hlaing Thar Yar township coordination committee:

SECURE project conducted basic volunteer training for COVID-19 emergency response. The total of 333 volunteers (female-194, male-139) were trained on basic health awareness for COVID-19 so that they can assist in fever clinics and quarantine centers. In-kind contributions were also provided in the form of hand sanitizer, masks, and 250 PPE to help protect the volunteers. They worked closely with Department of Health in supporting the community-led quarantine centers and fever clinics.

Activity 8: Cash assistance to vulnerable workers:

SECURE project provided cash assistance to factory workers, construction workers, people living with HIV/AIDS, sex workers, people with disabilities, unemployed workers from small hotel and housekeeping agencies. The total 1,458 (female-1,262, male- 529) received cash assistance of 240,000 MMK per person in 2020.

Activity 9: Public Awareness Campaign on COVID-19:

In collaboration with Cm Media, SECURE project provided health education on COVID-19 according to the Ministry of Health and Support (MoHS) guidelines. The campaign involved celebrities such as Kelvin, Saw La Pyaw Won, Aung Htet and Honey Nway Oo where they made videos that included messaging on good hand washing practices, wearing masks, social distancing and staying at home. The awareness campaign reached 26.6K people via Facebook.

THE MALE ROLE MODEL PROGRAM

The male role model program is one of the most successful programs conducted by the women's rights team where male members of the community are trained to be women human rights defenders-encouraging male participation in attaining gender equality. In 2020, AAM trained 38 male role models from Yangon and Mandalay. These male role models have led peer to peer awareness session promoting women rights and prevention of GBV. They have also supported GBV case management in collaboration with paralegals, general administrative department, police station and local CSOs/CBOs.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) CASE MANAGEMENT

GBV case management has been one of the core activities of the women's rights team since 2016. In 2020, through "Action for Social Justice" project funded by the Swedish government, AAM supported 7 GBV survivors. These survivors were referred by AAM's trained paralegals and the male role models. Since these paralegals and male role models are well-known in the communities, AAM is better able to support GBV cases. The GBV cases supported through this project involved

emotional, physical, sexual, economical abuse of women. AAM supported these women by providing them with cost for food, transportation, court trial processes, shelter, and psychosocial counselling. Through AAM's support, these women were able to access safe houses and attain divorce agreements with their husbands (in cases where the abuse was perpetrated by the husband).



Training on Covid-19 prevention for volunteers



Project inception in Kachin



Peer to peer support group meeting for Demoso Township

Case Story 1: Supporting families on the brink

Daw Mya Mya Than is a 51-year-old woman who lives in Hlaing Tharyar township. She lives with 3 family members. She works as a cleaner at Yangon Broom and gets paid daily to feed her family.

At first Daw Mya Mya Than lived alone. Then, her daughter's family rented a house and lived with her after her grandchild was born since they could not make for a living on their own. She gets 5,000 Kyats per day from her cleaner job. Her son-in-law also does ad-hoc jobs like street vendor to make income for the family. Income from the two could manage to pay the house rental fee.

When the Covid-19 pandemic first hit, it made them difficult to work. Office called Daw Mya Mya Than only two or three days per week. When the pandemic was in its peak, she lost her job. Her son-in-law also could not sell things wandering from ward to ward because of travel restrictions for Covid-19 prevention. It was difficult to feed the family.

"I went to a lender who lives in our ward and borrowed some money to solve our family's difficulties. But I could not borrow from her again since I could not pay back the previous loan and debt. Although I visited to some friends to borrow money, they didn't lend me since I am jobless. We had to eat rice soup to fill our bellies. We had some days we had to skip our meals," Daw Mya Mya Than said.

"At the most difficult time like that, I received 240,000 kyats cash assistance from ActionAid Myanmar through SECURE Project. I could spend the cash I received to buy some basic food ration like rice, cooking oil and other food, pay rental fee and pay back some debt. I cried tears of joy because this cash assistance helps solve our family's difficulties". We could manage to feed our family. I am very thankful for the donor for providing cash assistance when we are unemployed."



Photo: Internet

Case Story 2: Surviving in stormy sea

U San Nyunt is a trishaw taxi driver lives in Ward 94 of Dagon Seikkan township, Yangon. He is 49-year-old and has 3 family members.

His wife is 50-year-old, and they have 15-year-old daughter and 12-year-old son. His wife has got rheumatoid arthritis soon after their son was born. She can only do work at home. Although their daughter is in Grade-10 at school, she offers her mother help with household chores when the school is closed.

U San Nyunt tried to meet his family's needs by working hard as a trishaw taxi driver

"When we first arrived in Yangon [from Ayeyarwady], we rented a house and I worked as a labourer who lifted heavy objects. But lifting heavy stuff is not suitable for me as I get older. So, I changed my career and became a trishaw taxi driver, and made money for our family," U San Nyunt said.

He previously managed to pay monthly medical consultation fees for his wife from the income, earning around 10,000 kyats a day. Because they spent their money wisely, his income was enough to feed family, pay for children's educational expense and the rent on their house.

But the Covid-19 pandemic put U San Nyunt's family in enormous trouble. Since his family depends on the daily income, he cannot stop working, and is at risk from the disease.

"I keep driving trishaw taxi because it is more important to fill our family's bellies although I am afraid of getting Covid-19 infection. I wear Covid-19 protection materials. But I only get 1 or 2 customers a day since it is not as crowded as it was in the past. The small income cannot meet our family's requirements. Some streets are locked down due to Covid-19 positive cases and I cannot take customers who want to go there. That kind of difficulties gradually means there is no income for our family," he said.

"I have to borrow money from my friends to solve the difficulties for food and house rental fee. While I am facing with such kind of difficulties for long term, ActionAid Myanmar provides me 240,000 kyats as cash assistance through SECURE project. I really thank the volunteers from our Ward who listed vulnerable households and also thank the donor. I could manage to buy food including rice, cooking oil and salt, pay house rental fee and buy some medicine by using the money I received. Because of the cash assistance I could solve the problems of our family in this difficult time," U San Nyunt said thankfully.



U San Nyunt driving his trishaw taxi in the neighbourhood to look for a passenger

MEET OUR WOMAN LEADER



Ma Su Myat Tun
Humanitarian Consortium Manager
ActionAid Myanmar

Achievement of our work depends on synergy between partner organizations, communities and our experienced staff with different backgrounds. This section profiles one of our team member, Ma Su Myat Tun, Humanitarian Consortium Manager, who we interviewed about her experience working with AAM.

"My name is Su Myat Tun. I started working as a M&E Documentation Coordination Coordinator in the Governance team. I have been working in different positions at AAM for 5 years. I have humanitarian work background, and I wanted to learn more on development concepts for conflict affected areas. In the first 6 months of started working at AAM, I have had to read a lot to catch up with the work. I worked late at night. The best thing about AAM is that it has a tolerant workplace giving staff the confidence to take risks, which can bring the great results, and managers are very supportive. I am currently responsible as a Humanitarian Manager for Resilience project."

"AAM cares about staff in many practical ways especially in creating women friendly workplace including entitlements like 6-month maternity leave, childcare room at the office, flexibility working hours, etc. That kind of support helps reduce barriers for women to work professionally while maintaining mom's day-to-day parenting style."

"Gender stereotyping is still common even in some foreign countries. As an organization promoting feminism and women's rights in the workplace, AAM gives opportunity for women to take responsibilities in management positions, amplifies women's voices and gives inspiration to other women. Women can raise their voices and are allowed to discuss freely disregard of job positions. AAM practices democratic space that can be rarely seen in other organizations. And one can always get support from their supervisors and line managers. In my opinion, women have different perspectives in approaching a problem and can work well for best outcome. AAM values diversity. The happiest time working at AAM is the time when we intensively discuss one common agenda pertinent to all staffs which creates the open and free space to dialogue and further celebrations like religious festivals for different religions. We celebrated Water Festival, Festival of Colors, Eid Mubarak and Christmas. Gifting time is also not only for the staffs but also for the family members even maid who cares the staffs' children are gifted which definitely shows the organizations care over staffs immensely. Several different cares are around us maintained within the ActionAid's atmosphere."

"I remember a woman CSO member who has changed significantly after getting opportunity to join capacity building trainings on financial management and other necessary skills that AAM offered. She is from a community which

is conservative and patriarchal. She faced many challenges even to attend a training. There were times that she was criticized for attending trainings with male colleagues. She now has improved a lot. She gains confidence and articulates in public interview for humanitarian affairs. I believe the process of resharing knowledge to CSOs is very important here."

"Apart from work, I like to chit-chat with colleagues and friends in my free time in order to listen their feelings/passions over the work and find ways to sort out. Our colleagues are our immediate non-blood related family members with whom we share most of the active hours in a day relatively than the blood-related so always worth to listen to them and try to find way to support as much as we can. Moreover, I also love gardening since it is relaxing. My ambition of professional life is very simple. I want to work happily and, create the enjoyable working environment for the comrades."

INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

As part of internal organizational development, AAM held Women Forum in October 2020. AAM aims all staff Women Forum as a mechanism for transformation of the organization to be more women friendly place to work by identifying and addressing the issues and the (specific and strategic) needs of the women staff member. AAM Women Forum is re-opening a space for recognition and recruitment of women staff and it has also been taking non-negotiable (zero tolerance stands) on issues of sexual harassment in the work place, and has geared up its work on promoting women's rights issues within the organization.

All participants were inspired by the discussions on how women staff overcame challenges caused by Covid-19 pandemic, and the importance of women friendly workplace and capacity building trainings. Many shared their voices, committed for constructive actions on gender equality and set agenda for the next forum.

HR policy roll out, mental health sharing session, monitoring and evaluation training (internal), talk with medical professional on coping with the change in covid period, business English training, project cycle management training and report writing training were also arranged and held for internal staff wellbeing and personal development.

ANNUAL FINANCIAL UPDATE 2020

Income and Expenditure	Restricted			Unrestricted			Total		
	2020			2020			2020		
	Actual YTD	Plan YTD	Actual 2019	Actual YTD	Plan YTD	Actual 2019	Actual YTD	Plan YTD	Actual 2019
Total income									
Individual Giving - Regular	588	571	625	-	-	-	588	571	625
Individual Giving - Other	111	-	-	-	-	-	111	-	-
Philanthropy and Partnerships	465	580	815	-	-	-	465	580	815
Institutional	2,956	1,953	1,348	-	-	-	2,956	1,953	1,348
Other Income (Including Trading)	-	-	-	122	76	131	122	76	131
Total External Income	4,121	3,105	2,788	122	76	131	4,243	3,181	2,919
Statutory Expenditure									
Programme	3,029	3,202	2,249	39	-	-	3,068	3,202	2,249
Fundraising	112	73	99	48	96	100	160	169	199
Governance	14	16	29	4	8	0	18	24	29
Support	446	340	331	101	42	46	547	382	377
Total Statutory Expenditure	3,602	3,631	2,708	192	146	146	3,793	3,777	2,854
Surplus/ (deficit)	519	-526	80	-69	-70	-15	450	-596	65

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