Rebuilding Lives and Livelihood

Rebuilding a Market, Rebuilding a Community

Thet Kel Thaung Village, Labutta Township, Ayeyarwady Region

Cyclone Nargis devastated the South Western coast of Myanmar in 2008. Labutta Township was the worst affected. More than 80,000 people died in this small region in the Ayeryarwady delta. The economic costs were immense, leaving survivors struggling to maintain their livelihoods.

The central market in Thet Kel Thaung village, that served the nearly 50,000 families of ten villages in the township, was levelled by the cyclone. The market is the economic centre for these ten villages, where agriculture and fishing are the main sources of livelihoods.
Before Nargis, the 50-stall market thatched-roof market was the local hub for the trade in farm and other local produce. It was also the cultural heart of the township, drawing musicians and other performers. After Nargis, traders attempted to restart their businesses. A few of them put up temporary stalls. Rebuilding a market that had existed for some time needed organizational capacity and financial resources that were hard to muster locally in the aftermath of Nargis. The consequences of this for the local economy were palpable, as both farmers and market traders had nowhere to sell their stock. "The situation hurt in two ways," a local farmer and market stall holder said. "I didn't have anywhere to sell my pulses so I made less money. It was also difficult to buy fertilizer and tools."

As part of emergency relief and early recovery support in the cyclone-hit areas of the Ayeyarwady Delta, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported the re-construction of Thet Kel Thaung market place to help revive local economic activity. With UNDP's assistance Thet Kel Thaung residents established a market management committee that drew up a formal proposal for the construction of the market. The proposal included a commitment from 66 traders to contribute 65,000 Kyat (est. USD 77) each to pay for a stall in the new market. The local contribution was a total of four million Kyat (approximately USD 4,700) and the UNDP grant was nine million Kyat (approximately USD 10,600).

Work on the 4,500 sq foot new market began quickly a month after the proposal was submitted. Three months later, the market, with a tin roof supported by hardwood timber posts anchored in a concrete floor, was complete. Daw Aye Aye Win, a member of Market Management Committee said, "We are delighted to have built the new market which is much stronger than the old one."

The UNDP provided an additional grant of 6.5 million Kyat (approximately USD 7,647) to build 819 sq feet covered platform, with drainage for hawkers and poorer vendors. This grant also paid for the construction of a double unit fly-proof latrine with a brick lined septic tank, for common use.

"Functioning markets where producers and buyers can carry out economic transactions are essential for private sector development. Provision of such assistance is believed to create local demand for products which in turn will promote local economy in the long term," said Daw Khin Win Maw, the UNDP's area project manager of the Ayeyarwady Delta.

Today, Thet Kel Thaung Market accommodates 66 permanent sellers and 75 hawkers and has re-established itself as the economic centre for the villages in the area. The new and improved market is a blessing for everyone concerned. The traders were quite easily able to recoup their financial investment in the project and are now gaining more business than before.

"My new stall looks great. It is much easier to keep clean than the old stall and my rice does not get wet like it used to," said Daw Khin San, a stallholder from Thet Kel Thaung village. The Market Management Committee ensures the maintenance of the market. The committee has seven members, three of whom are women. "We are now well respected and make valuable decisions that help our community. I am proud to be a part of such a good change," Daw Aye Aye Win, said with some pride.

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**Highlights**

- **Market Management Committees are part of Community Development Committees established in the cyclone-hit five townships in the Ayeyarwady Delta.**
- **Two pilot rural markets were established in Bogalay and Labutta townships**
- **509 Community Development Committees were established to facilitate recovery activities**
- **More than 1,000 CDC members from 509 villages were trained for effectively managing community activities implemented with the support of UNDP"
Seeds of Food Security

Matupi and Paletwa townships, Chin State

In early 2012, twenty-one villages in the Ma’ra region of Chin state faced a serious food crisis. Prolonged drought and high temperatures caused a precipitous drop in rice yields. This meant an immediate fall in the quantity of food available that year; it also signalled a severe food crisis in the future, as farmers did not have enough paddy seed to plant for the following season. As frustration grew, villagers voiced their concerns in the regional parliament and urged the Chin state government to appeal to the UNDP for assistance.
What was required to stave of a future crisis was seed, and it had to be found quickly. The UNDP understood that the situation would worsen if new paddy seeds were not planted at the start of the growing season, in April and May.

On 1 January 2012 UNDP, together with the Ministry for the Progress of Border Areas & National Races and WFP, met with community members from the 21 villages and conducted a field assessment at Chin Let Wa and Yay Nit villages. Assessments were conducted in all 21 villages, from 31 January to 11 February.

Based on the assessment, the team concluded that 1,193 baskets of paddy seed were needed to ensure a decent crop in the next season. This would be enough to provide each household with one basket, with which they could each seed one acre of land. What they were after was a type of upland paddy seed that is resistant to high temperatures and withstands the vagaries of a changing climate.

UNDP tried to source the paddy seed locally, but none was available. It looked further to the state agricultural departments in Rakhine, Magwe and Bago as well as the Agriculture Research Institute. The search, coordinated by UNDP staff in different states ended in Kalaw Township in Eastern Shan State. The seed found there was tested to ensure that it met a 94 per cent germination success rate. It was transported to the villages in need by 2 April, in time for the growing season.

To distribute the seed to the farmers and to ensure future food security, UNDP established a seed bank in each of the affected villages. The seed bank provided paddy seed to a farmer at the start of the growing season and at the end of the season the farmer repaid the bank the amount of seed he had taken and also an agreed additional quantity of seed as interest.

The paddy seed acquired through the project delivered more than it promised. Farmers, who had accustomed to harvests that gave them 25 baskets an acre, had nearer 40 baskets from the new seed. The fear of a food crisis was now nothing but a distant memory and the coffers of the seed banks held the promise of secure future.

UNDP used its countrywide presence effectively to source paddy from one side of the country and deliver it to the other side. It accomplished this in a transparent and efficient manner in a relatively short time frame. The total cost of the project was Kyats 16,215,898 (approx. USD 19,000), with the cost of the upland paddy seed being Kyats 6,800,100. At $15 per household, it was money well spent.

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**Highlights:**

- To ensure food security throughout Myanmar, UNDP works with communities to facilitate 1,295 seed banks in 1,295 villages in 5 states benefitting over 290,000 people.
- UNDP has invested USD 3,377,123 in seed banks across Myanmar.
မော့စွဲနောက်ခဲ့တဲ့ အချက်အလက်များအား တည်းဖြတ်ခြင်း
Helping Displaced People Rebuild Lives

Nam San Yang Village, Waing Maw Township, Kachin State

Daw Khawn Hping, a mother of four, is a native of Nam San Yang, a village in the southern part of Waingmaw Township in Kachin State. Fourteen months ago, the sounds of gun firing and heavy weapons finally made Daw Khawn Hping and her family decide to leave their beloved village. “We never thought of abandoning our village,” she said, “but we unfortunately had to leave as there were frequent clashes between the two sides.”
Daw Khawn, her husband and children left the village one evening, they stayed two nights in a forest and before they found the courage to go out to look for a safe place of refuge. They walked along a highway and were lucky that a couple of hours later a kindly driver stopped and offered them a ride. He dropped them off at a church in Myitkyina Township where other people like them were taking refuge. UN estimates that some 75,000 people have been displaced across Kachin state. The situation is still unstable and almost all displaced people in refugee camps rely on external assistance for their basic needs.

Daw Khawn’s family was given a little space in the church to sleep and provided meals. Although they felt safe and were fed, the family missed the possibility of a normal life. “I still remembered my home, my friends and village surroundings and whenever I thought of them I immediately wanted to return home,” Daw Khawn said with sadness. With four school-going children Khawn and her husband also felt they had to have an income. She and her husband had been daily-wage workers in their village, but around the camp they found it impossible to find work.

In order to help people in Daw Khawn’s situation, UNDP supports a programme aimed at helping internally displaced people get back on their feet. Giving them a chance to learn or improve a skill, that may help them earn an income and will help them rebuild their lives when they have a chance to return home.

Daw Khawn was one of two women at her camp picked to attend a snack-making course that was part of this programme. Daw Khawn was very excited by the thought that she would finally be able to generate an income for her family. She learnt new dumpling making techniques during the training. She first made a few dumplings to test the new technique she had learned. Encouraged by the good feedback she got on their quality, she expanded the production.

Now she makes a daily net profit of Kyats 3000, selling dumplings in the ward in which the camp is located. “Experience makes me improve my skill and knowledge of dumpling making. I am waiting for the day I can return home and when I am back I will still be able to earn an income by making and selling dumplings,” said Daw Khawn.
မိမိတို့သည် အိုလ်တွင်းကို စိတ်ကူးစွေးတွေ့ရစ်သော စက်မှုများကို မြောက်သော စာအုပ်အဖို့တွင် အသုံးပြုပါ။

- မိမိတို့သည် ဖော်ပြသည် စာအုပ်အဖို့တွင် အသုံးပြုပါသည်။
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ဗိသုကာပတ်ဝန်းကျင်တွင် လူငယ်များကို ပျက်စားနိုင်ပါသည်။
HIV Positive Women Find 

Strength in Numbers

Location: Countrywide

In 2010, Daw Thida discovered that she was HIV-positive while she was pregnant. At that time, she knew very little about HIV and no information on HIV-support, so she faced difficulties in getting access care and support services. She dealt not only with self-stigma and also social stigma and the discrimination it brings with it, in the family, community and also among service providers. She and four other HIV-positive mothers formed the Rainbow Women’s Group in an effort to prevent mother-to-child transmission, ensure safe delivery, and facilitate the referrals, for health and social issues, to relevant organizations and agencies. The group also wanted to create job opportunities for the women while reducing discrimination. Daw Thida said, “Pregnant women living with HIV encountered many challenges such as limited knowledge
and information and no access to services. This is one of the reasons I formed this group.

Initially, the women earned money by making and selling baby nappies and handicrafts. In late 2010, the UNDP HIV project funded an expansion of the group's activities and provided capacity building training. The group also received training on leadership from the Women's Organization Network through the YWCA. Currently, the group has 12 members: nine HIV-positive mothers and three men. One of the members said, "We have facilitated the referral of 22 HIV-positive pregnant women for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and provided education support to seven children. Nowadays, the community recognizes our group and we are not stigmatized." Her group successfully organized World AIDS Day 2011 activities at a monastery in her ward. Ward leaders and community members attended. Four members of her group also had a chance to attend the White Ribbon Day that was held at the French Embassy.

Rainbow Women's group is just one example of the many grassroots HIV positive women's networks that the UNDP HIV Programme supports around the country. The UNDP HIV programme also realizes the need for gender equality in HIV policy in Myanmar. Gender inequality continues to be a major driver of HIV transmission. Moreover, women with HIV often face greater stigma and face more severe negative social reactions than men. They also have to deal with associated health concerns and economic woes. To add to these difficulties, women often have greater responsibility for care of their children and other vulnerable family members like the elderly, orphaned relatives, and those living with long-term illness.

To help strengthen the capacity of women living with HIV, UNDP provides not only technical and financial support but also other relevant assistance for the creation and growth of groups such as Myanmar Positive Women's Network (MPWN). In 2008, 30 HIV-positive women established the Myanmar Positive Women Network (MPWN) in order to: increase the capacity of infected women in HIV prevention, care and support; promote engagement in advocacy and policy processes and improve gender equality in the national response to HIV and AIDS. After its establishment, the network's members received leadership and other training and participated in organization and development workshops run by the UNDP and UNAIDS.

All the members of network are HIV positive women. In 2011, the network had 4,000 members across the country. The network is actively engaged in advocacy for women focused HIV issues at the local, regional and national levels. The group is now linked with influential decision making bodies as well. For example, two members of the network serve as representatives to the Myanmar Country Coordination Body (M-CCB). This is the country's highest coordination committee for the health related issues and is chaired by the minister of health.

Women across Myanmar are thankful for the support network. One member exclaimed, "These groups have been the source of strength for me through these difficult times. When I was disowned by my family and shunned by my village, I came to rely on my peers in this group more than ever." Many group members gain a sense of empowerment and self-worth: "Before the group, no one would listen to me. Now, I see my ideas being discussed at village meetings."

**Highlights:**

- There are more than 160 community groups engaged in their own HIV responses.
- More than 50 self help groups and community based organizations are able to use community funds for peer and social support.
- Over 1500 trained volunteers able to conduct outreach activities.
စြိုးရိုးချင်သောကျော်ကြားချက်များအတွက် ကြည့်ရှုချက်

စာပေအတွက် မိမိကို အောက်ပါအတွက် ကြည့်ရှုချက်များပေးပါသည်။

1. ဗုဒ္ဓဘာသာပညာရေးစနစ်ကို အထောက်အကူရောက်ပါ။
2. သားသင်ကဲ့သို့ ပညာရေးစနစ်ကို စီမံခန့်ခွဲပါ။
3. စာပေအရေးကို ကျောင်းသားအတွက် ပေးစေပါ။

စာပေအတွက် ကြည့်ရှုချက်များအတွက် အောက်ပါအတွက် ကြည့်ရှုချက်များပေးပါသည်။

"စြိုးရိုးချင်သောကျော်ကြားချက်များ" အား စိတ်ချီအခြေခံအဖြစ် အသုံးပြုပါ။

ထို့အပြင် ထိုစားသောက်ခြစားမှုကို အခြေခံပါ။

"ကျော်ကြားချက်များ" အတွက် အားလုံးဖြစ်စေရန် အခြေခံပါ။

စာပေအတွက် မိမိကို အောက်ပါအတွက် ကြည့်ရှုချက်များပေးပါသည်။
 Faces of the Human Development Initiative 1993-2012

Myanmar Positive Women’s Network (MPWN) နေရာတွင်ပါဝင်၍မိမိတို့အတွက် HIV/AIDS အပေါ်တွင်လုပ်ဆောင်ရွက်ရန် ချိုးဖျင်သည်။ MPWN ကို အခြေခံဖြစ်သောအချက်အလက်များကို ဖော်ပြသည်။

MPWN ရဲ့ လုပ်ငန်းများအတွက် UNAIDS ကို အသေးစိတ်ပြုပြင်မှုများကို ဖော်ပြသည်။

- မိမိတို့၏ကျွမ်းကျင်ရေးအပေါ် အတိုက်ခံစားရန် အသုံးအနှုန်းကို ဖော်ပြသည်။
- အရေးရှိသည်းများကို ဖော်ပြသည်။
- လူ့အနေဖြင့် အရေးရှိသည်းများကို ဖော်ပြသည်။

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Food Banks: an End to Hunger and Indebtedness

Chin, Mon, Kayin, Rakhine and Kachin states

“As a widow with three young children, I was struggled a lot to take care of them especially during the rainy season when my income is low and paddy prices are high. I was afraid of that season, as I used to go into debt just to buy food… I am so glad now I have no debt thanks to paddy bank. This paddy bank is my trust, like my husband.”

Daw Hla Yee, Thae Phyu Chaung Village, Kyaikhto Township, Mon State

“Before the establishment of a food bank, poor farmers died twice – one is in a debt cycle caused by food insecurity and...
another is in an untimely death. Now, we are so satisfied to live more abundantly with the Food Bank, which saves our lives, and we no longer think of migrating and looking for a better life in other places. Thanks God!” An old poor farmer, Hmongtlang Village, Thantllang Township, Chin State.

There are many farmers like dawHla Yee whose lives have changed through the food banks. A number of them live in Kansauzang. Kansauzang is situated 53 miles Northeast from Tonzang town. It has a population of 606 comprising 80 households. The main source of livelihood in the village is farming. Those with land grow upland and lowland paddy, ginger, potatoes, and chillies. Some run small-scale live stock farms. Incomes from farming are limited as transport and access to markets is difficult. And half of Kansauzang’s farmers are poor earning 150,000 kyat per year. The rice they grow feeds their families for seven or eight months at the very most.

The four months of summer are a particularly difficult time in villages like Kansauzang. There is no food to harvest and families often have to borrow from better off neighbours or relatives or wealthier people in the village to feed themselves. Repayments for loans of rice are harsh. For every basket of rice borrowed, the repayment is two baskets.

In 2007 the United Nations Development Programme assisted the people of Kansauzang establish a paddy bank to solve the problem of the food gap months. A paddy bank is a storage facility for rice. Members of the bank can borrow rice during food gap months and repay it with interest after the harvest. Forty-seven families, representing a total of 306 people – half the village – signed up to be members of the paddy bank. A five-member committee was set up to manage the bank.

In 2007, the UNDP CDRT contributed 524,095 Kyats (US$617) to build the paddy bank and 960,000 Kyats (US$1,130) to purchase 192 baskets of rice paddy. The committee contributed labour and timber to build the 20’x12’x9’ paddy bank. The committee also purchased 75 baskets of paddy to contribute to the bank.

The positive impact of the paddy bank encouraged others to join and in time 63 families, totalling 485 people or more than two thirds of the village were members. To encourage those still wary of joining the Paddy Bank Committee decided to give 5 baskets of paddy as an incentive to each of the four poorest families in the village.

Since it was set up the bank has been a valuable source of rice during the food gap months and its reserves grew with the 25 percent interest it earned on loans. In 2012, the paddy bank received a further 1,531,200 Kyats (US$1,800) of project funding to buy more paddy. Its paddy reserves, including the interest earned, were now sufficient to support all its members. The original paddy bank was not big enough to store the growing paddy stock and a new building was built in October, financed with community support. Each member family paid Kyat 6,500 Kyat for the new bank.

Kansauzang’s concerns are the concerns of small and marginal farmers in many other parts of rural Myanmar. The choice they have is often hunger or indebtedness. Food banks are a simple and sustainable solution to paving the way to development in these areas.

**Highlights:**
- 1,295 paddy and food banks were established in 1,295 villages in Chin, Mon, Kayin, Rakhine and Kachin states.
- Financial and organizational management trainings were provided to 1,295 paddy bank committees.
- With strengthened organizational skills, paddy bank committees managed to increase paddy basket stocks and were able to help 5,7674 poor households or 298,896 people.
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A Story of Enabling the Disabled

Pet Ma Khan Village, Thayet Township, Magway Division

Maung Nay Lin Aung was born with only one good leg. The other one is much shorter, coming down only to his knee. He lives with his parents and two siblings in Pet Ma Khan village. Family and friends affectionately call him To Bo, which translates as “one leg shorter than the other”. His parents are poor farmers. They and Nay Lin Aung’s brother and sister, supplemented the small income in the farm by doing daily wage work during the cropping season. The income was not such that they could afford to buy him an artificial leg so, he relied on an old wooden crutch to get around.

Nay Lin Aung, who is now 16 year old, dropped out of primary school. He stayed at home, while the family went to work as his disability made it impossible for him to work on a farm. But, like many boys Nay Lin Aung was fascinated by machines. From when he was a little he had been taking things apart and putting them together to see how they worked. Tinkering with the innards of small mechanical and electric gadgets, he figured out how to fix things when something went wrong. Neighbours and friends would bring him things to repair - battery operated flashlights, portable radios, bicycles and small electric lights. But, it remained a hobby and he helped people. But no one imagined that in this lay his future.

In early October of 2011, the United Nations Development Programme came to Pet Ma Khan village to select trainees for a motorcycle
maintenance and repair course. All the villagers, many of who had things fixed by him, put Nay Lin Aung’s name forward. This was a chance for the young man, and also a means by which the village could have its own motorcycle mechanic.

Motorcycles are the cheapest form of transport in these parts. A round-trip by bus costs 3000 Kyats. On a motorcycle, which also offers greater flexibility in terms of time, its 1500 Kyats. But getting simple maintenance or repairs done was not easy. It is over 6 km on a rutted hilly mud road from Pet Ma Khan to where the tar-sealed road starts. This is also how far villagers had to come to have tyres filled or a puncture repaired. For more complicated repairs they had to travel another 25 km to Thayet, the nearest town.

Nay Lin Aung, was excited but nervous. He said, “I was very happy to attend the training. I never attended a training like this before, so I was scared, but the UNDP staff and my parents encouraged me.” The 15-day course taught the fundamentals of motorcycle repair. At the end of the course each trainee received a set of basic tools. Nay Lin Aung was a diligent student and excelled at the course. He said, of his experience, “Though I am not the same as others trainees, I was very interested in it. I studied hard and absorbed much: the electrical system, engine maintenance techniques, repairing methods, and so on.”

As soon as he finished the course, Nay Lin Aung, began repairing motorcycles in Pet Ma Khan and for people from neighbouring villages. In the couple of weeks of October following his training he earned 8,500 Kyat. A day’s casual farm work pays 700 kyat. The following month he earned 20,000 Kyats and in December 30,000 Kyats. In a few months he was able to buy additional tools at a cost of 35,000 Kyats and invest over 100,000 Kyats in stock, like fuel, engine and break oil, tyres and tubes, break cables and other spares that any respectable mechanic’s shop might sell. To these he has now added, decorative accessories. With the income he has from repairing motorcycles, Nay Lin Aung no longer depends on his family for support. Rather, he now has an income that allows him to help his family when needed and he is saving, to build his own motorcycle repair shop. He sees a future for himself: “I will keep working hard and saving to make my dreams come true,” and gives thanks to “those who helped me to provide for my parents.” Before this, Nay Lin Aung, like many people with disabilities (PwDs), had little to look forward to and no hope of ever being financially independent. Fifteen days of vocational training opened up a new life and new possibilities for him. PwDs all over the world, struggle to achieve the same standard of living as others. It is all the more difficult in countries where the government is unable to provide a safety net.

Most development programs are designed to help healthy and able individuals to overcome the disadvantages created by poverty. However, in a country like Myanmar where need is so prevalent even amongst healthy individuals, those most in need of assistance often go unnoticed.

Nay Lin Aung’s story shows that even in such cases, a little help goes a long way.

**Highlights:**

- There are over 1.2 million people with disabilities (PwDs) in Myanmar, representing 2.32% of the population.

- Only 10% of disabled people in Myanmar attend high school and only 15% report any current income. Less than 2% of disabled people have access to the additional services they need.

- In Myanmar, every 10 households has a family member with disabilities. These households are twice as economically vulnerable as households without a disabled person.


- The HDI program has provided vocational training to over 3,000 poor PwDs in Myanmar.
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THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE: Where Every Life Counts
By Sanaka Samarasinha

I arrived in Yangon at the end of 2006 after a two-year, exhausting stint overseeing UNDP’s Tsunami recovery effort in Sri Lanka. A colleague in New York half jokingly said to me that I would find my assignment in Myanmar akin to “early retirement.” “Not much has happened there in years and it is unlikely to change anytime soon,” he said. Another senior colleague told me more seriously, “Don’t rock the boat. Just let the programme continue the way it is.” But it seems fate had other plans.

Over the next four years, Myanmar and its people were forced to confront myriad, unprecedented challenges and ordeals. Starting with widespread civil unrest, a crackdown by the military and the forced departure of the UN Resident Coordinator in 2007, to Cyclone Nargis in 2008 – the worst natural disaster to ever hit the country, killing almost 140,000 people. All this while several low-intensity armed conflicts continued in many border regions and a number of smaller, yet deadly, natural disasters struck periodically across the country.

Looking back now, there were many trying moments that will remain etched in my memory. Being tear-gassed and shot at in downtown Yangon; Crash landing onto an island on Inle Lake in the middle of the night; Barely surviving five meter swells that threatened to capsize our small boat in the Delta; Struggling on foot for five hours through waist deep mud and dangerous flood waters in Northern Rakhine; Enduring more than 10 hours of 150 KMPH cyclonic winds while sheltering my two-year old daughter under tables as roofing sheets blew off and massive trees collapsed all around us. Of one thing I am veritably certain: it was no “early retirement!”

But all was not bleak. It was also a period of unimaginable opportunities and unexpected progress. Myanmar held its first elections in two decades and Parliament convened for the first time in almost fifty years. My next-door neighbor who I had not seen in four years,
Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, was released from house arrest. Warring ethnic groups embarked on peace talks with the government. And UNDP began strategizing with its partners on finally lifting the restrictions on its programme after 17 long years. Myanmar and its people were at the cusp of creating history, and I was one of the few outsiders fortunate enough to be there to see it all begin.

By the time I arrived in Yangon, I had worked with a number of UNDP offices and visited more than 20 around the world. Imagine my surprise then to discover an extremely effective grassroots programme called the Human Development Initiative. It was unlike any other I had seen being implemented by UNDP anywhere else. And at the same time, its reach and impact on people’s lives were astounding. Rather than just read about it or hear from colleagues, I made it a point to immerse myself in the workings of its extensive machinery from the very outset. I wanted to know if it really worked. I wanted to know the people who made it work and I wanted to know the people for whom it was made to work.

Over the next four years my team and I traveled to every State and Division of the country and spent time with almost all of the more than 40 field offices of the HDI. We tried to understand the distinct challenges of every region but we also tried to discover the commonalities. Almost all of the 1000 plus field-based staff of the integrated development projects and the more than 2000 staff of the microfinance project originated from villages similar to the ones they served. Their job was to facilitate — whether encouraging women’s groups to save money and learn skills, or showing farmers how to increase their yield and protect their livestock, or training midwives who were the only “medical” help most villages ever received, or building schools, clinics and cyclone shelters, or ensuring access to clean water through low-tech systems, or distributing bed nets to prevent Malaria that affects one out every ten people in the country, or helping villages manage their own natural resources so that their children and their children’s children could still benefit from the environment around them — facilitate they did. In more than 8000 villages, impacting the lives of more than 5 million people over 20 years.

The impact of the HDI is well recorded through numerous evaluations and assessments over the years. The statistics and numbers are abundantly clear. But it is the anecdotal evidence that showed me how we were making a real difference in the lives of those who most needed a difference. The difference was what I saw written on the faces and heard in the simple words of the thousands of men, women and children I met around the country. The 12-year-old and her 5-year-old brother whose parents had died of AIDS who dared to hope because the HDI would work with the village elders in Mon to set up a sustainable source of income to make sure they would be healthy, they wouldn’t be hungry and they would be able to go to school. The story of the elderly woman in the Dry Zone who proudly told of setting up a business, building a house and sending her son to university because she was able to start a business with a $40 microfinance loan a decade earlier.

The smiling faces of the young children who could study at night or the widowed women who could sleep in peace because a small hydroelectric unit in Shan State provided at least enough electricity to power two bulbs in each house. The hundreds of women across the country who spoke eloquently and confidently about development plans for their villages and how belonging to Self-Reliance Groups transformed them from passive housewives to equal partners at home and involved, empowered members of their communities. The hundreds of men who spoke proudly about their wives, daughters and sisters as indispensable sources of household income because of the skills and knowledge they had acquired. The HIV positive young women who told us about how the Self-Help Support Groups helped them help each other whilst sensitization campaigns changed the attitudes of their neighbors and vocational training programmes gave them an income and a sense of purpose. The 15-foot tree in my former garden, once a 6-inch sapling from the Pindaya HDI office, which propelled a nation-wide tree planting campaign resulting in more than 4 million being planted in community woodlots, school yards and mangroves all over Myanmar in less than 4 years. We made a difference – all of us together. To be associated in some small way with such a dedicated and remarkable effort was a privilege beyond words and one I will cherish for the rest of my years.

Mr. Sanaka Samarasinghe is UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative for the Republic of Belarus. He served as Deputy Resident Representative in Myanmar from 2006 to 2010.
သောင်းလာမှုအားလုံးကို သတ်မှတ်ပေးလျှင် ခြေစိုက်လိုလျှင် အဆိုပါ အခြေခံစာများကို ရှေးပေးပေါ်လျောသော အချက်အလက်များကို မှတ်သားပေးမည်။ သောင်းလာမှုအားလုံးကို ခြေစိုက်လျှင် အဆိုပါ အခြေခံစာများကို သတ်မှတ်ပေးလျောသော အချက်အလက်များကို မှတ်သားပေးမည်။ သောင်းလာမှုအားလုံးကို ခြေစိုက်လျှင် အဆိုပါ အခြေခံစာများကို သတ်မှတ်ပေးလျောသော အချက်အလက်များကို မှတ်သားပေးမည်။ သောင်းလာမှုအားလုံးကို ခြေစိုက်လျှင် အဆိုပါ အခြေခံစာများကို သတ်မှတ်ပေးလျောသော အချက်အလက်များကို မှတ်သားပေးမည်။ သောင်းလာမှုအားလုံးကို ခြေစိုက်လျှင် အဆိုပါ အခြေခံစာများကို သတ်မှတ်ပေးလျောသော အချက်အလက်များကို မှတ်သားပေးမည်။ သောင်းလာမှုအားလုံးကို ခြေစိုက်လျှင် အဆိုပါ အခြေခံစာများကို သတ်မှတ်ပေးလျောသော အချက်အလက်များကို မှတ်သားပေးမည်။ သောင်းလာမှုအားလုံးကို ခြေစိုက်လျှင် အဆိုပါ အခြေခံစာများကို သတ်မှတ်ပေးလျောသော အချက်အလက်များကို မှတ်သားပေးမည်။ သောင်းလာမှုအားလုံးကို ခြေစိုက်လျှင် အဆိုပါ အခြေခံစာများကို သတ်မှတ်ပေးလျောသော အချက်အလက်များကို မှတ်သားပေးမည်။ သောင်းလာမှုအားလုံးကို ခြေစိုက်လျှင် အဆိုပါ အခြေခံစာများကို သတ်မှတ်ပေးလျောသော အချက်အလက်များကို မှတ်သားပေးမည်။ သောင်းလာမှုအားလုံးကို ခြေစိုက်လျှင် အဆိုပါ အခြေခံစာများကို သတ်မှတ်ပေးလျောသော အချက်အလက်များကို မှတ်သားပေးမည်။ သောင်းလာမှုအားလုံးကို ခြေစိုက်လျှင် အဆိုပါ အခြေခံစာများကို သတ်မှတ်ပေးလျောသော အချက်အလက်များကို မှတ်သားပေးမည်။
မြို့နေသူများသည် အခြေခံကျွန်ုပ်သူများ၏ လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အောက်ပါ လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။ အပါအဝင် အဆင့်မြင့်သော လေ့လာမှုများကို လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ပါသည်။