Health and Hope for the Future

Kyaung Ywar Village, Kyaikto Township, Mon State

"How happy my family would have been to see the present situation but it came too late for them," said Daw Mu Kyaw, sitting outside the Kyaung Ywar village sub-health centre, which has been functioning since 2008. Seventy-six year old Daw Mu Kyaw lost a child in 1997, to a particularly virulent strain of malaria that killed many in her village. It was terrible time, she said, "Sixteen people died. We had to get to the township hospital by horse drawn carts. Some died on the way and some in hospital."

Kyaung Ywar, a village of the Kayin ethnic group, in Kyaikto Township in Mon State lies in the forest on the western edge of the Kyaikthtee Yoo Mountain. Until recently the only way from
the village to town was a forest path where snakes were a common hazard. Kyaung Ywar residents rarely ventured to town. One of the biggest problems of being cut off was that access to health care was as good as non-existent. Traditionally people here believed that evil spirits caused diseases and the only way to appease them was through worship, and so they continued this way. Malaria, viral fevers and diarrhea were all too common. Most years half of the village’s 556 people would suffer diarrhea. Over a third of them had had malaria. Snakebites and work injuries often led to amputation or death and child mortality was a painful fact of everyday life.

In 2005 the United Nations Development Programme conducted a participatory appraisal in the village. Health, it found, was the top priority. Given the difficulty of reaching the township health centre, it was determined that a Sub-health Centre (SHC) should be built in the village to provide basic medical services. In 2005 the community began construction of the SHC. UNDP provided 3,868,000 Kyat (USD 4,550) and the community made a contribution of 655,000 Kyat (USD 750). UNDP also provided trained medical staff for the health centre.

Accompanying this was a village-wide health education initiative, which promoted community health through classes on personal hygiene, food safety, the construction and use of fly proof latrines, malaria prevention, safe motherhood, early child development, immunization, TB, HIV/AIDS, the proper maintenance of water sources and drainage. UNDP Health Education staff conducted the classes, and also trained the village health education volunteers (VHEV) who carried the program forward.

It was these volunteers who were crucial to changing attitudes to ill health and its causes in the village. They conducted courses in Kyaung Ywar and three neighbouring villages, which also use the Kyaung Ywar village SHC. Their efforts have produced a palpable improvement in general health and health awareness in the villages. This table speaks for itself.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.</th>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Before UNDP persons/year</th>
<th>After UNDP to 2012 persons/year</th>
<th>Program activities carried out/ behaviors promoted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Malaria</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Using mosquito nets, village cleaning and sanitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Diarrhea</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Through filling ponds, using fly proof latrines, fly proofing fresh food, proper renovation of 10 hand-dug wells, and hygienic water and sanitation processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ailing Mother after child delivery</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Raising awareness, medical treatment, and vaccination, regular examination by doctor, physical exercises.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Child mortality</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Mother and child-care, vaccinations, good nutrition, good baby-sitting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>TB</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Referral to township hospital and proper treatment, and keeping away from healthy people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Seasonal sick</td>
<td>379</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Village sanitation, prevention by medicines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Malnutrition</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Eat food including 3 important nutritional groups in recommended proportion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These numbers are both impressive and important, showing a clear link between program activities and improved lives of beneficiaries. The numbers are bolstered by the verdict of residents of Kyaung Ywar village. UNDP staff recently conducted a review of project performance and this is what the villagers had to say:

“The SHC gives us medical treatment when we need it. This is really important for work injuries and snake bites. It also helps patients with HIV/AIDS, TB who couldn’t get treatment before.”
-Ma Cho Aye

“By the teaching of health awareness, we all know the source of malaria and have already corrected the source.”
-U Win Naing

“What’s important is birth-spacing. My younger sisters have over 10 children. But for me, I don’t want that much. Thanks to health education, now I know birth-spacing.”
-Daw Thein Kyi

Highlights:

- UNDP, Myanmar has helped to construct 230 rural sub-health centres in 230 villages.
- Presently 2,525 community health volunteers are working in 49 project townships across Myanmar.
"အိုးတိုးတစ်ချိန်သာ အလေးရှိရင်း ကျွန်တော်တို့တွေ့ရမှုကို ပြချင်သည်။ မိန်းကလေးတို့၏ ပြန်လည်မှုမှာ ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ အနေအထားအမှန်များအနီး ကြင်နာပြီး ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ ပြန်လည်သို့ ပြန်လည်နိုင်မှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သဘာဝပေါင်းစမ်းမှုအား ရှာဖွေဖို့ မည်သူများသည် ကျွန်တော်တို့၏ သ
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“အီးသိန်းမှာ ပြောပြပါမယ် ကြောင်းမှာ ကြည်ညာခြင်း လိုအပ်ပါတယ် နေထိုင်စဉ်တွင် အမှုအဖွဲ့အစည်းများစွာ ပြောပြပါ သူများအပါအဝင် အမှုရေးသားမှု လုပ်ငန်းများကို ပြောပြပါမယ်” (ထိုင်း)

“ပြောပြပါမယ် ကြည်ညာခြင်း လိုအပ်ပါတယ် နေထိုင်စဉ်တွင် အမှုအဖွဲ့အစည်းများစွာ ပြောပြပါ သူများအပါအဝင် အမှုရေးသားမှု လုပ်ငန်းများကို ပြောပြပါမယ်” (ထိုင်း)

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Building Bridges, Connecting Communities

Pin Laung Township, Shan State

A small bridge over a swift flowing stream near Pin Sone village was the lifeline for ten villages in Nang Toke village tract, Pinlaung Township in Shan state. Without the bridge, the 710 households in these villages have no safe access to the market, the high school and middle school or the health centre. Pin Sone, like the villages around it, is home to people mostly of the
Pa-Oh ethnic group. They are small tenant farmers, who grow corn, pigeon peas and garlic.

Many years ago the residents of Pin Sone had built a timber bridge across the stream. Successive monsoons left the stream wider and the bridge increasingly precarious. The bridge needed frequent repair. The monsoon of 2010 was particularly bad, the embankments slipped and the bridge became unsafe. People still used it to cross on foot, but it was impossible for bullock carts and trawleries (the mini tractor-pulled trolley) that transport the produce grown in the ten villages to the market.

This meant that the produce and goods going to or from the villages had to be unloaded on one side of the bridge and hand-carried across to the other side, and re-loaded on a cart or trawlergy. This created delays and also raised the cost of transport, causing a real drop in already small farm incomes. When there were medical emergencies, the absence of a sturdy bridge on which a cart of trawlergy could travel, was very sharply felt.

Ten villages used the bridge, but no one had responsibility for maintaining the bridge. Pin Sone residents did temporary repairs to keep it going for as long as it did. “Villagers not only from our village but also from neighbouring villages faced many difficulties when the bridge deteriorated, but no one used to really take responsibility for the maintenance of the bridge,” Nang Hla Ngwe, a native of Pin Sone Village said.

In 2005 a ten-village committee was set up to try and build a new bridge. But the committee didn’t get very far. It did not communicate its intentions clearly and so lacked the trust of the community. In 2011, with life becoming harder without a fully usable bridge, Pin Sone village asked the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for help. UNDP assisted with a feasibility study and cost estimates, for a new reinforced concrete bridge, guiding the process of electing an executive committee, proper communication between the committee and community through village-wide meetings and field visits and transparent record keeping.

“We helped facilitate the election of a village executive committee, define the roles and responsibilities of that committee, and capacity building initiatives that improved the community’s organizational and financial management of the bridge construction,” said U Win Naing, the UNDP’s township project manager in Pin Laung Township.

All ten villages contributed cash and labour for the new bridge. The cost was 3,844,400 kyat. The community contribution, apart from labour, was 2,449,000 Kyat (2,880 USD) and UNDP’s contribution of 1,396,000 Kyat (1,640 USD). UNDP also provided the technical staff to supervise the bridge building. UNDP project technicians also trained those working on the site, in building quality and standards. The goal was that the community gained a bridge and with it the organizational and technical know-how to handle village-level infrastructure projects. The bridge was inaugurated in January 2012. The Committee presented accounts and set out a maintenance plan for the future.

A small bridge has secured the ten village’s link to the world and also helped create a model for community-managed projects.

**Highlights**

- UNDP has invested 30,353,853 USD for the construction of basic infrastructure (e.g. bridges, footpaths, jetties) and for strengthening the capacity of community leaders and volunteers to manage and sustain village infrastructure projects.

- About 3,100 village infrastructure projects have been implemented with support from UNDP.

- UNDP supported 2,043 rural villages with basic infrastructure improving accessibility.
 […] ဗျူးအားဖြင့် တာဝန်ဖြေရှင်းစွာဖြင့် အားထိုးသည်။ မြို့များတွင် အားထိုးသည် စိတ်ပေးသည် သိပ်းသားသည် ကြောင့် အဓိကဗျူးသည် အထွေထွေအဖြစ် အားထိုးသည်။ အထူးသဖြင့် အားထိုးသည် လိုအပ်သည် ကြောင့် အဓိကဗျူးသည် အားထိုးသည်။

“ကြော်ငါးမျိုးတွင် စိုးရိမ်သော အာရှသီးသီး ရှင်းလင်းသော အားထိုးသည် လိုအပ်သည် ကြောင့် အဓိကဗျူးသည် အားထိုးသည်။ အားထိုးသည် လိုအပ်သည် ကြောင့် အဓိကဗျူးသည် အားထိုးသည်။ အားထိုးသည် လိုအပ်သည် ကြောင့် အဓိကဗျူးသည် အားထိုးသည်။

မြို့များတွင် အားထိုးသည် လိုအပ်သည် ကြောင့် အဓိကဗျူးသည် အားထိုးသည်။ အားထိုးသည် လိုအပ်သည် ကြောင့် အဓိကဗျူးသည် အားထိုးသည်။ အားထိုးသည် လိုအပ်သည် ကြောင့် အဓိကဗျူးသည် အားထိုးသည်။

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Strengthening Dams, Securing Livelihoods

Pin Laung Township, Shan State

The people of Teelone village are farmers. They grow paddy, maize, groundnuts, sesame, pigeon peas and garlic. Monsoon paddy and winter garlic, grown on family farms are the major source of income.
A mini earthen dam, across the Nam Taing stream that flows to the west of the village, is part of the small irrigation system that is crucial to the winter crop grown on some 53 acres of land. Parts of the dam wall, and the spillway, built by Teelone’s farmers, often collapsed in the monsoon. The dam or the reservoir had to be repaired at least a couple of times each year. Each time the repair work took at least ten days. The farmers attempted to strengthen the walls with mud, stone and bamboo matting and hoped that there would be no next time.

They knew the solution to their problem was a sturdy concrete embankment. They had talked about this often. Once they had even tried to raise funds to re-build the dam, but all their savings combined were not sufficient. Just transporting the building material was expensive. Teelone is over 30 km from PinLaung town, a journey that takes two and a half hours, an hour and a half on foot and the rest by bicycle. In the dry season a bullock cart can make slow progress on the narrow mud road, but in the monsoon the road is as good as non-existent.

In mid-2009 with the guidance of the UNDP, the farmers formed a committee to manage the renovation of the dam and the irrigation system, including hiring a technical person to measure the coverage area and estimate the cost. The cost of the project, designed to irrigate 53 acres, was 6,040,000 Kyat. Work on the dam started in December 2009.

Teelone residents provided voluntary labour for the building work and also made a small cash contribution to the renovation project. In four months the dam and the spillway were ready and the embankments of branch canals that often gave way in the rains had also been strengthened. The renovated system now irrigated a 16.5 uncultivated acres in addition to the 53 it had been designed for.

“As a result of the repair of Teelone dam, farmers are able to have two good harvests each year” said U Khaung, a member of implementing committee.

The additional 16.5 acres of irrigated land has led to an increase in the total yield. Paddy yields have increased by almost 50 per cent and garlic yields have doubled. It has also meant that there is more work for the 11 landless families that rely on daily-wage farm work for a living or rent land left uncultivated by other farmers. “My hands used to be empty all the time,” said one landless farmer, “Now they are always full either busy with work or holding food. If I keep working hard, I no longer have to worry about the next day, or the day after.”

The committee set up by the farmers maintains the renovated dam, charging farmers, an annual user fee based on the size of the land that is irrigated. The fee is four baskets of paddy per acre and five visses (about eight kilogram’s) of garlic per 100 visses harvested.

The dam construction in Teelone is typical of hundreds of small infrastructure projects supported under the UNDP Human Development Initiative, which make a big impact at the community level.
ဗိုလ်ချင်းကြီး ဝိဟိုင်း နိမိတ်ငြိမ်းချင်း

စာရင်းကြည့်သားများ ချက်ကြည့်ချက်များ ဦးစွာ စိတ်ချရာ အဖြစ် သုံးစွဲမှုကို ဖော်ပြသည်။ ပထမဆုံး မှ အနီးဆုံး အချက်အလက်များအဖြစ် သိရှိနိုင်သည်။

ဗိုလ်ချင်းကြီး ဝိဟိုင်းလေးကို အားလုံးစည်းပေးသည်။ မိုးကြီးများ နေရာများ ထွက်ရှိနိုင်သော အချက်အလက်များအဖြစ် သိရှိနိုင်သည်။

စာရင်းကြည့်သားများ ချက်ကြည့်ချက်များ သုံးစွဲမှုကို ဖော်ပြသည်။
Growing Communities, Dreaming of a Future

Naung Cho Township, Shan State

Nam Pwat, a village of ninety six Shan ethnic households, who eke out a living selling what they grow - corn, terrace paddy and ginger on small terrace farms. Nam Pwat is about forty miles, on a narrow rutted road, from Naung Cho Township and transporting produce to sell in the township is difficult and expensive.

Besides, crop yields have been dropping. Over the years there has been forest and soil degradation, water sources had vanished and often there is insufficient water for cultivation.
There has also been a great deal of illegal charcoal production, limestone mining and timber gathering in the area. Daw Mon Mon Thein, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) township project manager in Naung Cho, said, “All three of these practices were unsustainable, using up natural resources faster than the environment could regenerate them.”

Villages like Nam Pwat were caught in this downward spiral with no idea how to get out. Working with Self Reliance Groups (SRGs) that it had helped set up, UNDP introduced the idea of a tree-planting project. It organized a meeting between the Department of Forestry and representatives of the village self-reliance group. Forest Department personnel explained how climate change mitigation depended on forests and trees. The SRG representatives were persuaded that teak plantations offered their village a long-term solution. Daw Aye Myaing who participated in the meetings said, “Not only were we drawn to teak plantations because of the profit our village would see from selling teak wood and finished products, but we could also help the environment.”

Daw Aye Myaing and another SRG representative Daw Kya Oo, shared this idea of establishing a teak plantation with village leaders and elders. They also took the idea to the neighboring Nam Thukha village, because, as Daw Aye Myaing put it, “A joint plantation would improve forest conservation and help to avoid possible conflicts over resource use.” This was not the first time that teak trees had been discussed. However, earlier there was no incentive to grow them. Teak trees that had been grown by individual farmers were often neglected, because everybody knew that the trees belonged to the government. Now the government allows individuals ownership of teak trees grown on their own land. “Being able to own this land and the trees has really made us want to grow them,” one villager said. “The government reforms have made us happy to work hard and UNDP has made it possible.”

UNDP arranged the purchase of 800 teak seedlings from the Department of Forestry at a cost of 200 Kyat (US$ 0.24) per seedling. The villagers formed groups and started clearing land; the seedlings were planted on land on both sides of the road between Nam Pwat and Nam Thukha. Their task, however, is far from over. The trees have to be nurtured. For village residents it will be a process of “learning by doing”, with a little technical support from the UNDP and Department of Forestry.

The villages now have a legally registered plantation, and in the future they will be able to cut down the trees and produce timber products. They have also made the decision to plant an additional 10 acres of teak and other trees. The teak trees are still young, but the people of Nam Pwat and Nam Thukha are happy to watch them grow, along with their dreams for the future.
စိုးရိမ်သို့ အကြောင်းပြုသူ ဗုံးမောင်

စိုးရိမ်သို့ အကြောင်းပြုသူ ဗုံးမောင် သူ့မှာ မောင်ကြီးမားပါတယ်။ အချိန်ကို တွေ့ရှိသော အခြေအနေများ လူ့အချင်းအရှေ့အဖြစ် စိုးရိမ်သို့ ကြည့်ရှုနေပါတယ်။ ဗုံးမောင်က စိုးရိမ်သို့ ကြည့်ရှုနေပြီ ပါတယ်။

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 Faces of the Human Development Initiative 1993-2012

"ဒီမှာတော့မှန်ကန်သွားတော့ရင် ဒီနည်းလျားပဲ စိတ်ကူးထားတာ အမှန်တကယ် နေရာတွေကို လေ့လာခြင်းကို ရှင်းပြခြင်းတွေကို အနည်းဆုံး ဖော်ပြချက်ပေးသွားပါတယ်။ ဒီအပေါ် သင့်တော့မှာ အရေးပေါ်တာ မျှဝေနိုင်ပါတယ်။"
The Journey of Human Development Initiative
by Nilar Swe

Though read in various books, I did not really witness what poverty was till I joined a development project. After working several years in the government and private sectors, I joined UNDP’s HDI project in 1997. Going around project villages in various locations, dealing with people from those villages made me understand what poverty was. I saw the scenes which I hadn’t seen; I knew the things which I hadn’t known with regard to poverty.

In summer, villages faced with scarcity of water. Like others, I had to drink green tea but water boiled was from a pond used by both human and animals. And I saw crowd of students in a tiny school with so called roof and wall but
no proper floor. They sat on the plain ground or sometimes used some materials as a floor to sit on to study their lessons. Some students brought their younger sister or brother to school as their parents went to work in paddy fields and there was nobody to take care of children. School I saw was filled with voices of reciting lessons, along with cries and mumbles of babies. In some places, I saw people who could not work for long period because of malaria infection. Though some people recovered from malaria, their faces seemed pale because of malnutrition.

Daily lives of poor people were very struggling. Some villagers had to develop a plot of land by removing many plant roots by hoes only. Shifting cultivation practice in remote areas allows anyone to develop land and grow crops for one season but it was very hard to get a plot of cultivable land. Even after preparing the land suitable for plantation, some people could not use it for their own because they could not afford to grow crop. Thus they had to sell out for tackling daily needs. One can imagine how worse their lives were. Most of the farmers did not have enough money to cultivate with appropriate techniques. Thus they used traditional ways, no fertilizers, no systematic techniques. As a consequence, they got very low yield that made their income inadequate and thus they had to work as casual workers at the same time.

UNDP-HDI project reached to villages with those situations. The project started various development activities in the villages. From 1997, the time I joined the organisation, to 2002, sector-wise development activities were implemented in collaboration with other dedicated agencies which had full technical expertise.

Health project provided health-awareness activities, fund and emergency patient referral system. Volunteer Health Workers (VHWs) and Auxiliary Mid-wives (AMWs) were trained in collaboration with Health department for enabling to provide basic health services in project-supported villages. Water, sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) project provided ponds, tube-wells, rain water collection tanks, gravity-flow-water-collection system in mountainous regions, fly-proof latrine, etc. Microfinance project assisted loans with low interest mostly to women from poor households to work income generation activities.

As per slogan “Education for all”, Education project provided new primary schools, school furniture and stationeries so that all primary school-age children were able to access primary education. In addition, UNDP also supported in strengthening capacity of teachers, raising parents’ awareness on importance of children’s education, and conducting non-formal primary school program for adult illiterate people, etc. Food security project assisted cash grant and technology to poor households for income generation activities, and also provided awareness training, cash assistance and techniques for environment and forest reservation. All villagers had to participate in the planning of village development work. At first it was very difficult for them to participate because of lack of knowledge. It was also not an easy job for facilitators to let people know the advantages of participating in community development activities. Though tiresome, I came to be delighted when I saw them practicing development works with transparency, accountability and participatory manners.

Moreover they became aware of maintenance and sustainability of the community development works. Project provided required training to local carpenters and school construction committee members, and let them manage school constructions. “If I am born again, I am sure I will be able to attend in this school we built because it is well constructed and there also is a committee to maintain for long-term use,” a school committee member noted. I felt very pleased when I heard his remark. "Once, villagers from nearby villages said not to pass by the village for it was no safety; villagers from our own village were not interested in sending
children to school. But there were significant changes and an affiliated middle school was also built by ourselves. Parents became more interested in their children’s education,” the headmaster of the middle school concluded. “Previously, there was no sanitation in our village because of water scarcity, and people were and looked dirty all the time. But now the situation is totally different, with the help of gravity-flow water collection system provided by UNDP, the whole village can access clean water within the village. We no longer need to worry about water. All the adults and children are able to take bath and wash daily, and hygiene of people is improved;” said a woman from a project village, Shan state.

In 2003, all sectoral projects except microfinance project were combined under Integrated Community Development Project (ICDP), which continued implementing community development activities till 2012. During this project period, apart from regular activities, Self Reliance Groups (SRG) were also established with women from poor families. Many of the project activities were delivered through SRGs. Traditionally women work at home by doing house chores and they did not have chance to participate in community affairs. UNDP empowered women with the provision of not only livelihood assistance but also capacity development training. Now they play critical role in making decision for community activities.

To enable women plan their own business, earn their own income and manage their earnings effectively, UNDP provided several trainings to women through SRGs such as business planning preparation, booking keeping, etc. In addition, assisting agriculture and livestock breeding techniques were disseminated through Agriculture Extension Workers (AEWs) and Livestock Extension Workers (LEWs) who were trained by UNDP collaboration with line departments.

Since SRG members work with perseverance and help one another with team spirit, now they could extend their works, own more agriculture land and livelihood assets, which they just dreamed to possess before. Some women now own a big house. Some farmer families now own draught cattle, power tillers for their use as well as to rent to others. Their incomes are higher and higher notably. As a result of this they could pay attention on their children’s education, they could spend more for health. I feel very pleased seeing number of achievements and changes. “Well, we, UNDP did it well” I thought with smile.

Furthermore, I have learned many things from community such as appropriate local techniques, and lovely culture. All families in village/community participate and help whenever a family organises social or religious events. I also learned from community how to withstand and tackle impoverish situations. These experiences are valuable for my life. I found some SRG members who are better than our staff in conveying SRG concepts and teaching techniques. Being SRG members, they know more than many staff regarding with the SRGs nature, problems and solutions. I still remember a senior project personnel who once told “Do not feel poor are pitiful but you just care and pay respect to poor community for their perseverance.”

Some SRG members trained by UNDP are able to audit not only her group but also other groups. Some members could hold job opportunities in NGOs and UN agencies.

UNDP has implemented various development activities with all possible ways under an allowed policy guideline. While a number of significant achievements can be seen throughout the HDI project period there are still many gaps to be filled as well.

I trust UNDP will continue addressing these gaps under its new country program. I am very pleased to help my fellow citizens with UNDP and involving in human development works for two-third of my whole career so far is indeed an unforgettable period of my life.
နောင်တော်ကြက်ကလေးများနှင့် သာသနာရေးရာကို ကြည့်ရှုနေသည်။ အိုးအိုးကိုလဲ သုံးစွဲရာကို အောက်တွင် ပြောင်းလဲနိုင်သည်။

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“စောင်ရဲ့ ကြက်ကလေးများ” ကို ယုံကြည်လျက်ရှိသော ဖြစ်ကြောင်း ပြောင်းလဲနိုင်သည်။

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