



KARENNI

Building a new society for Karenni

KSDC

NEWSLETTER

February 2016

“The vision of of Social Development Center is to promote the lives of the people who have suffered Human Rights abuses, to teach non-violent skills to build up a new society, to develop the rule of law, to value human dignity and to protect the environment”



About SDC

by **Aung Sun Myint**

SDC is located in Karenni Refugee Camp 1. On the Thai - Myanmar border. It was founded in 2002 by three alumni of EarthRights School Burma (ERSB).

The ERSB Alumni had learnt about Democracy, Law and the Environment. They wanted young people in their community to be able to study these subjects as well so they founded SDC.

SDC has produced over 200 Human Rights and Environment activists since its formation. Our coordinator and co-founder Aung Sun Myint continues to work with our team to realize the vision he set out with his fellow ERSB alumni in 2002.

This month at SDC

by **Principal Myar Reh**



According to our schedule for February, 2016 we have implemented some activities at our SDC training center in camp and at the SDC/ ERI joint program office in Nai Soi.

According to our schedule in February, we have been providing knowledge about Constitutional Law, Child Rights, Basic Economics, Democracy for All and Gender Perspectives to the students on the Basic Course by the staff of SDC. In the campus in Dokita the students have been taught pre-intermediate English as well as IT-skills.

As we SDC yearly schedule, on 26th February we held our 3rd teachers and Parents meeting of this year project at our center in camp. During this meeting, we explained about the things what we SDC have implemented from starting to currently and for the future activities that need to be implemented before this year project finished. We also explained to the parents about our success and challenges while we are running this year project.

During this meeting, we asked the parents how could they support to our coming 14th graduation ceremony that will be held on 29th March,2016 at SDC center in camp#1. Also, during this teachers and parents meeting we explained the parents about their children's education, social skills, health situation during their course and we showed the report cards of each student to their parents that mentioned about their education and social skill how much their life have changed during this course that to be able to compare their situation before and after attending this training course.

As a future plan, we will hold our SDC 14th graduation ceremony on 29th March at our center in camp. On the 28th of November, we had a farewell party for our departing volunteers Nathan and Nastassja, where we had the opportunity to show them our appreciation and thank them for their hard work and great contribution to SDC.

Learning vocabulary!



Basic course students studying English



Farewell Party for Raffi Hantabli



On 6.2. we said goodbye to Raffi Hantabli, our long-time coordinator volunteer. Celebrations were held in Dokhita and were attended by our staff of teachers as well as current and former students. Speeches were made by the managing staff, fellow volunteers and of course by the students. Everyone emphasized the significance of Raffi's work to the future of the local community. Many of the students from current basic course as well as from last year's advanced course expressed their gratitude for

Raffi's encouraging spirit, as they were inspired by him to use English more openly. The students performed traditional folk-dances as well as some modern hip hop dances as well. Traditional Burmese dishes were served with Karenni wine.

Raffi's commitment and work for KSDC was the most valuable to us and his encouraging words keep thriving us even after he left. His time here will be remembered with warmth and we wish him the best of

luck and success in all of his future endeavours.

We will miss you!



Interview with graduates of SDC 6th Advanced community management course

By Severi Raja-aho

Kha Ra Lay (left) and Lee Reh (right) are keen on using their knowledge and skills that they gained to help their community.



I discussed with two graduates of last November's advanced course about their life, studies and current situation and plans. Kha Ra Lay and Lee Reh are both originally from Karenni state and have made a long and difficult journey to SDC.

Q: What is your background and history?

Kha Ra Lay: I'm Karenni, I was born in Karenni state. I came to the camp in 2010. I have one younger brother. My family lives in the camp. My family is happy for me. Me and my brothers finished high school in the camp. My relatives are living in the Karenni state.

Lee Reh: I'm from Karenni state and I am a Karenni. I came to the camp in 2009. My Parents live in Karenni state. I have 5 brothers and 2 sisters living in Karenni state. I studied until grade 8 in Karenni state and after that I moved to the camp to study more. I decided to move to refugee camp #1 because I knew that education is free there, unlike in Karenni state. I wanted to get education myself and my parents didn't know at the time that I came here. The first time I came here I wanted to be a soldier, but I didn't become one and I ended up in High school and after that to SDC.

Q: Can you describe your experience in Karenni Refugee Camp 1 and Karenni State?

Kha Ra Lay: People can't see the social issues, because they are not educated. The lives of women and children are very difficult. Domestic violence is a problem because women and men in the camp don't know about women's rights. There are many children from poor families whose parents are unemployed and their children can't go to school.

Lee Reh: My family is from DeeMaSow. Life is very difficult in Karenni state. The biggest problem is that my family doesn't have land to grow rice because of land issues with the Burmese military. My family doesn't have anything. No cars, no machines. The healthcare is scarce and the clinics don't have many resources. We need to pay money to get treatment. There are not really any other education possibilities in Karenni state than primary school. In the camp I lived with my uncle. Life is easier than in Karenni state because we have enough food and free education, but there are many people without money or work in the camp, which creates a lot of problems.

Q: Why did you apply to SDC?



Kha Ra Lay: I wanted to help my community. The mission of the organization was something that made a deep impression to me. Studying in school was very good for me as I could study many interesting subjects.

Lee Reh: When I studied in high school, I heard about SDC and what kind of things they teach. I thought that is important and wanted study there. SDC is good for our community because knowing about the subjects is good for our life. We must know about them to develop our community and to make change in our community.

Q: What are you doing now and what are you planning to do in the future?

Kha Ra Lay: I have a job in KNPP office in Nai Soi. I give training about human rights, constitution and women's rights inside the Karenni State. I like my work very much and I want to raise the awareness in my community.

Lee Reh: Now I work in KNPP office in Nai Soi in the law office as an intern. I'm giving training about human rights and law inside Karenni state to local people. I think I want to work here for a long time. In the future I want to help my community by bringing them awareness about law and human rights.



My Life Story

By Dah Reh, a Basic Course Student



Now, I would like to write about myself. My name is Khu Dar Reh Lin. I have 7 people in my family. My father name's Su Reh and my mother name's Htaw Meh. I would like to do an introduction about my history.

I was born in June 1st, 1995. During that year, my parents worked as farmers every day. In year, KNPP declared Karenni State independent. In 1996, we left Karenni State. We went to Karenni Refugee Camp #1. This year, my parents were very poor. We didn't have money. We were very sad in family. My parents had a lot of debt. We were very poor in very poor conditions. I started to walk in 1997. I didn't know about the situation in family. I didn't know about my parents being very poor so I was happy. Because I was very youngest in family, I didn't know anything. I went to nursery school in 1998 and

1999. My parents went to cut bamboo and wood because my parents needed to build a house. When I started school I went alone. I was very sad because my friends could have lunch every day, but I didn't because of my parents were so poor.

In 2000 I was going to continue to KG school. I was very happy for myself. UNHCR delivered help for Refugee camp. UNHCR helped the Refugee camp with everything: food, clothes, education material. They provided for Refugee everything and anything. After, I was going to continue to primary school in 2001. During the time, I studied from grade 1 to 5. I went to primary school which made me very happy because, I was learning new things and knowledge. I continued to grade 2 to 3 in 2002 and 2003. I didn't like read books or learn history. During the time, I wasn't clever student. I was very lazy. I didn't want to learn and read books.

I was going to continue grade 3 to 4 in 2004 and 2005. Other pupils were bullying me every day because, I was smaller than them. I was very afraid of other pupils. Sometimes I wasn't going to school. Sometimes I was crying, sometimes I was angry, I fought back. I was very sad.

My hobby was drawing pictures. So, I went to library and Art room in our school to draw and paint. I went to learn about Art and to draw a picture every day. I used paint. I tried to learn about how to draw and paint. In the evenings I started to paint pictures in competitions and won many prizes.

At the time I didn't want to study because, I started to drink Karenni wine. I was lazy and did not go to school. I continued to practice drawing pictures. I lost one year of education. I continued to grade 6 in 2009. When I went to middle school No (1), I tried to catch education in this year.

I visited with my friends to Nai Soi. I crashed motor- cycle in Nai Soi. I broke my hand. I didn't go to school for 3 months. I stayed in my house all the time. I didn't go outside because I didn't go to school and I lost education for 3 months. When I broke my hand I also lost my health. When I went to hospital, I took many medicine. Medicine made me very dizzy. I didn't go to study. During the 3 months, I didn't go to school. When I went to school I was ashamed. Sometimes, I met my friends and my friends laughed at my hand. I was shy all my friends made fun of me. I didn't want to go school. My parent were very worried about me because my parents thought that I would lose education. I didn't help my parent with

housework. After 3 months I tried to go to school. I tried to continue education. I tried to write and read texts. I promised to my parents that I would study harder in the future. I promised to help my parents and my community. I tried a placement test and I passed. In 2011 and 2012 I continued to grade 8. This year I started to like school again.

I tried to learn English grammar, I was very interested to learn English grammar. I wanted to speak English language. I studied hard this year. When I had summer holiday. I was a voluntarily Artist. I taught children to draw in summer holiday. I wanted to teach the children to draw pictures. I was very happy to teach the children. I continued to high school in grade 9 in 2013 and 2014. Every summer I want to teach children how to draw.

I went to continue to grade 10 in 2014 and 2015. Going to school with my old friends was fun because they helped me with everything. They taught me to learn English language every day. I expected to speak very well. English grammar was still very difficult for me, but I tried learn to English grammar again and again. Finishing grade 10 made me and my parents very happy. I visited Karenni state in Myanmar during the summer holiday which made me very happy. I visited my grandmother and my uncle who I met for the first time.

In 2015 I continued to social Development center school .I was learning 5 subjects in SDC school .I learned Human Rights, Democracy, Environment ,Rule of law and Economy. Studying in SDC makes me very happy because I have made new friends. Sometimes we play football, volleyball and cane ball. We go to cut bamboo and fire wood. Going to Dokita campus is very fun for me because I was learn vocabulary English language and grammar .I speak with English teachers. Volunteer teachers teach me a lot about English language which makes me very happy.



Help us achieve our goals

To achieve the goals and the promise we made in our mission statement we rely on many avenues of support. Core organizational and project funding comes from our main donors. We are also supported by our own community, local staff and volunteers from around the world.

But we still need support to continue doing the good work we do. So if you are able to support us financially or with advice or expertise please [contact](#) us:

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The Curriculum Project



Thank you for reading and your interest in SDC and the Karenni community.