



Building a new society for Karenni

KSDC NEWSLETTER

March 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**

This March the 14th annual basic course came to an end. The last classes were held on Friday, 11th of March for both groups in our campuses in Refugee camp #1 and Dokita. On Sunday 13th a farewell ceremony was held to one of our foreign volunteers, Sylvie Beard. The following week was an examination period for the students. The week began with the English exam on Monday 14.3 and was followed by tests from Environmental Studies, Gender Issues, Human Rights and Rule of Law.



The preparations for the graduation ceremony were made at the same time. The representatives from the local community, the SDC alumni, supporters and friends of SDC, as well as the relatives of the students were invited to the ceremony. As SDC has achieved a major role in the life and education of the local community, a new bigger stage was built.

In the event speeches were heard from the founder and the head coordinator Aun San Myint, myself, the local community leaders and guests as well as from the students. The graduates who strived the best in the examinations were awarded. The alumni as well as the graduates sang songs to the guests and lunch was served. We can say that the 14th basic course was as successful, if not more, as the graduation ceremony!

The last of the last English lesson!



The Basic course students having their finals on English



SDC wanted to show its gratitude for teacher Sylvie for the great help she done.

Memories

by Sylvie Beard



As Martin Luther King said, « I had a dream ».

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My dream was to spend a few months in Asia and to share a community's daily life while helping.

That's how and why I applied to SDC School after having browsed their whole website from A to Z, highly appealed by this interesting project. And, I couldn't believe it, my wish was fulfilled and I was selected to volunteer!!!

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I didn't know exactly what to expect because this was only my second trip to Asia (I had been one month in Cambodia in 2014) and my first experience as a volunteer.

And then I was lucky again, being welcomed and accepted by SDC Family.

I'm not sure but I hope I have been able to teach some English knowledge to the 14th Basic Course students. What I'm sure of, however, is how much they taught me. Because they had such tough lives, they live in such difficult conditions but they're so willing to learn! They coped with so many obstacles to get education!

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Because the Burmese people I had a chance to know are always smiling, happy, singing and playing the guitar. Never complaining. Even if I know they're sometimes sad because they miss their families and friends. But they don't show it, they're brave and strong. That's the lesson I learned from you, SDC Family: the less we have in life the happier we are. It's enough to stick to the basic true values of life: family, friends, food, shelter and education (and love sometimes ahahah).

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As I told you many times, you are an example for so many young Westerners and you were one for me. I'll talk about you when I'm back in my country and I'll never forget you. When my heart is sad and I have to face some difficulties in my life I'll think of you and how brave you are. I'll try to never complain. If so, I'll come back and have the lesson again!!! 😊😊

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for accepting me as I am, for sharing such strong, beautiful, merry moments with me.

I thank you for doing my hair and putting some thanaka on my face.

For letting me sleep in your room even if there were already 7 people in it.

For taking me to Full Moon Festival in Nai Soi.

For teasing me, for making fun of me.

For teaching me some Karenni language and dancing.

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For sharing your culture with me.

For studying and being good students to please me.

For being patient with me when I wasn't with you.

For making me feeling useful.

I'll keep you in my heart forever and I hope you won't forget me. Please think of me every time you'll have to learn or speak English. You can make it!!! I want to be proud of you. Don't forget that you are the brilliant new generation and Burma is waiting for you!!!

Please keep me informed about your future and send me pictures of your babies! 😊😊

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I hope I'll be able to come back at the end of the year and meet all of you again.

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And, of course, this adventure wouldn't have been possible without the courageous initiative of the founders and principal of this school. I thank them so much for all their efforts to provide education to the underprivileged Burmese youth. I'd like to thank in particular Principal Mya Reh for his precious support and help.

And I also want to thank my colleagues with whom I shared a strong piece of my life, especially Teachers Saara and Severi for their kindness and friendship. And all the past and future volunteers in SDC School, your contribution was and will be so helpful!

To the future ones, I'd like to say: Please come and share your knowledge with these wonderful bunches of young people who are hungry for education! If the living conditions are very simple they're sufficient and I'm pretty sure you'll get more than you'll give, as it happened to me: a real lesson of life, hope and love.

Thanks to everyone, thanks for accepting me, for sharing.

I'll never forget such a unique and precious experience.

I love you to the moon and back <3

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SDC is very grateful for the support and effort of teacher Sylvie. We will never forget you.



The graduation ceremony

The students of the 14th basic advanced course graduated at 29th of March 2016. The ceremony was held in refugee camp #1 at the SDC campus. We are proud of the 45 new human rights activists our program has created.





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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