

PLAYFUL TEACHING

MORE AND MORE CHILDREN ARE DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL IN MYANMAR. OFTEN THEIR PARENTS CAN'T AFFORD THE SCHOOL FEES ANYMORE, OR THE CHILDREN NEED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE FAMILY INCOME BY WORKING THEMSELVES. IN NON-FORMAL CLASSES, BOYS AND GIRLS BETWEEN 6 AND 12 YEARS' OLD GET A SECOND CHANCE. WITH SPORT AND PLAY, THE TEACHERS GENTLY GUIDE THEM BACK TO SCHOOL ROUTINE. SAD PROVIDES THE TEACHERS WITH THE TOOLS THEY NEED.

“The word relay is my favourite. The children move and the team competition motivates them. I can really wake up my students’ thirst for knowledge.” Myat Myat Soe has completed an SAD course on playful teaching methods. The 8-year-old is an English teacher at Education 4 Youth (E4Y), an education project for young people in Myanmar. Together with E4Y and Scholarships 4 Streetkids (S4SK), SAD is working for high-quality education for disadvantaged children in this multi-ethnic country.

SPIRAL OF POVERTY BECAUSE OF LACK OF EDUCATION

Since 2010, Myanmar has become increasingly less politically and economically isolated. After decades of military dictatorship, the population is putting its hopes in economic upturn and social balance. However, the most recent developments suggest that the wealth created by economic growth is ending up in the hands of a few rich families, while the poorest people in society bear the costs and the risks. Because of persistent poverty, lots of families move to the cities, in particular Yangon, the largest city. Because they have no qualifications, the parents survive on badly paid odd jobs. Children are left to their own devices. They drop out of school, or are forced to work in restaurants, train stations and factories as day labourers, so they can contribute to family income. Without appropriate education, without reading and writing, and without learning a trade, these children face the same destiny as their parents, and a lifelong spiral of poverty.

”

THE WORD RELAY IS MY FAVOURITE. THE CHILDREN MOVE AND THE TEAM COMPETITION MOTIVATES THEM. I CAN REALLY WAKE UP MY STUDENTS' THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE.

MYAT MYAT SOE, TEACHER AND PARTICIPANT OF SAD'S WORKSHOP

CUSTOM-DESIGNED LESSONS WITH SPORT AND PLAY

State schools provide no remedial help. Many children cannot go back to school, or do not want to, because the lessons do not correspond to their life circumstances or learning needs, or because their parents cannot afford the fees for the senior classes. “Most children work seven or eight hours a day,” says Ye Yint Kyaw, a teacher at

499

Children

21

Teachers trained

40

Games

S4SK. “A boy in my class looks after an old, blind man for the whole day after school. That’s why the classes are not during the working day – they’re between six and nine in the morning.” Ye Yint Kyaw, who has perfectly-styled hair, also teaches future barbers at the vocational school. He does not see teaching as a job, but rather as a calling. “The fact that the children have to work is only one of the problems. They often come to school with negative feelings. They have problems with their parents, or other worries. Many of them are not focused and struggle to concentrate.”

The main aim of SAD and the local partner organisations is to create a suitable learning environment for the children. SAD has adapted its proven educational approach – which has received a UNICEF award – to the needs in Myanmar, and has developed appropriate teaching materials. We are training teaching staff from E4Y and S4SK in planning and implementing playful, interactive lessons. The transfer of knowledge is just

one of the aims of sport and play based lessons. Through play, without even realising it, the children practice focusing on a task, working together in a team, finding creative solutions and making decisions together. The training for teaching staff demonstrates the disadvantages of the ever-popular teacher-up-front style of instruction. The teachers develop the tools needed for giving varied lessons and reacting to the children’s specific capabilities. They learn which games are suited to which learning objectives, and how they can be adapted to the varied needs of the pupils.

HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION FOR EVERYONE

With its focus on equality and quality in education, the SAD, E4Y and S4SK joint project contributes to UN Sustainable Development Goal 4: “Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning”. The lessons are specially adapted to the needs of disadvantaged children. The aim is equal participation of men and women in training, and boys and girls at school. In addition, SAD raises parents’ awareness of the importance of education, especially for girls. To promote quality in the lessons, SAD has developed practical tools such as checklists for minimum standards. In training, the teaching staff learn to use these tools and to evaluate their own lessons.

SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH PARTICIPATION

To ensure long-term effectiveness, SAD includes all teaching and project staff in project planning and the development of the training. The curriculum and games are based on the curriculum used by the two partner organisations. In training, the teachers learn how to further develop the teaching materials supplied and to adapt them to their needs.

AFTER THE TRAINING

“I’ve learnt lots of tips and tricks for increasing the children’s motivation to learn. It was really fun!” The



WORD RELAY

In the word relay, the first group to make a word from a muddled selection of letters wins. The teacher places cards with letters at one end of the playing field, and tells the children which word they need to spell. As soon as the teacher has told them the word – for example “rice” – the first child starts running and looks for a card with one of the letters on it, for example an “R”. When they’re back with the group, the next child sets off.

course met Myat Myat Soes's expectations. She has often struggled to motivate children who aren't interested in learning. Ye Yint Kyaw is enthusiastic about the course too: "I didn't think cooperation between men and women would work so well in training! It's normally very difficult in Myanmar. But after a few teething problems, it worked really well." Ye Yint Kyaw has more plans. He travelled eight hours by bus from his hometown for the one-week course. "When I was young, I was never motivated to move and do sport. I'm looking forward to sharing what I've learnt with my pupils, and with other people who work with children and young people in our municipality."



PROJECT

Learning with fun through sport and play – A second chance for disadvantaged children in Myanmar

DURATION

2016 – 2017

PARTNERS

Education 4 Youth (E4Y), Scholarships 4 Streetkids (S4SK); the Canton of Bern, the Municipality of Genthod, the cities of Lancy and Veyrier