

# **Report on Emergency Response to the Students Affected by Fire in Labutta Township in Ayeyarwady Region**



On 9<sup>th</sup> February 2016 at Township Education Office at the time of distribution of school kits to the affected students by large fire

**19<sup>th</sup> February 2016**

**SEEDS Asia Myanmar Office**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

On 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016, a large scale of fire occurred in Labutta Township. 179 houses and 20 shops were burnt down and 190 houses were affected by fire. The cause of the fire has not been officially identified<sup>1</sup> and reported as of 19<sup>th</sup> February 2016. SEEDS Asia Myanmar Office initiated needs assessment right after the fire in Labutta and later, then number of affected students and their needs of education materials were identified through the coordination with Relief and Resettlement Department, Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement (Labutta District), and Labutta Township Education Office. Based on the situation, SEEDS Asia took a decision to support 170 students out of 5 different schools by providing educational materials in a package as “School kits”. 4,148,000 Kyat\* was kindly donated for distribution of the School kits to 170 students during a day of 6<sup>th</sup> February by well-wishers from Myanmar Engineering Society (MES), professors of universities in Myanmar, our friends living in Myanmar, headquarters of SEEDS Asia and all staff members of Myanmar Office of SEEDS Asia. Purchasing and packing of the material were completed on 7<sup>th</sup>, then kits were carried to Labutta Township on 8<sup>th</sup> then On 9<sup>th</sup> February, 170 study kits were distributed to the students at Labutta Township Education Office in corporation with General Administration Office, Township Education Office, Labutta District Office of Relief and Resettlement Department and school principals and teachers in Labutta Township. We would like to note our deep appreciation to all well-wishers to support the affected students I the Township though our operation.

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\*as of 6<sup>th</sup> February, addition to that amount of 337,520 ks. were donated

## **LABUTTA TOWNSHIP**

Labutta or Latputta is a town in the Ayeyarwady Region of south-west Myanmar. In 2008, Labutta was heavily damaged by Cyclone Nargis with record of dead/missed around 85,000 people. Since then SEEDS Asia have implemented DRR activities with the mission of Building Back Better in the township such as providing education for disaster risk reduction (DRR) through Water Knowledge Resource Center (WKRC) and establishing a DRR Activity Centre at schools in which takes a role of centre for capacity building on DRR in the scools and community. Those activities have been conducted in good cooperation with General Administration Office, Township Education Office (TEO), Relief and Resettlement Department (RRD) and school principals and teachers, the network helped us in the quick assessment and operation to reach the affected.

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<sup>1</sup> Though official cause is not reported but neighbours were mentioning about the case of neglecting fire during cooking



## CAUSE AND DAMAGE OF FIRE

On 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016, a large scale of fire occurred in Labutta Township. 179 houses and 20 shops were burnt down and 190 houses were affected.

The cause of the fire has not been officially identified and reported as of 19<sup>th</sup> February 2016. In general, fire is the most common man-made disaster in Myanmar which accounts for 70% of all of disasters in Myanmar (Union of Myanmar, 2009)<sup>2</sup> in terms of numbers of cases. The main reason are caused by neglecting of fire or by problems with household electricity. The Vice President H.E. U Nyan Tun, accompanied by Union Ministers Dr. Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin and other high officials visited a relief camp in Labutta Township to observe and listen to the victims of the damage caused by the fire and he mentioned provision of relief aid at the government level including education, health care and rehabilitation for the township<sup>3</sup>. In fact, economy was also heavily damaged since the affected area are main area of the fisheries business such as crabs, fish and prawns. It was reported that 300 crab wholesalers lost their shops in the township and it made damage for 5-10 million kyats on each shop.<sup>4</sup>



Picture 1: Damaged area in Labutta Township

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<sup>2</sup> Et al. Union of Myanmar, Hazard Profile of Myanmar (2009)

<sup>3</sup> Vice-President U Nyan Tun inspects rehabilitation drive for Labutta fire victims (The Republic of the Union of Myanmar President Office), <http://www.president-office.gov.mm/en/?q=briefing-room/news/2016/02/08/id-6366>

<sup>4</sup> Crab Export : Labutta Fire Affects Supply To Thailand, China (mitv NEWS), <http://www.myanmarinternationaltv.com/news/crab-export-labutta-fire-affects-supply-thailand-china>



Picture 2: Damaged area and a student in Labutta Township



Picture 3: A relief camp in Labutta Township on 8 February 2016, organized by RRD and GAD

## **NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

SEEDS Asia Myanmar Office initiated needs assessment immediate after the fire in Labutta through telephonic interviews with concerned departments and teachers. As of 6<sup>th</sup> February 170 students from 5 different schools in the Township were identified as victims of the fire who lost out houses, their belongings including

educational materials. Since school examinations were expected to take place on 15<sup>th</sup> February onwards in the country, it was urgent that school uniforms and educational materials be sent to all the students without delay.

Grade	Age	Male	Female	Total
1	5-6	9	5	14
2	6-7	10	8	18
3	7-8	2	7	9
4	8-9	9	3	12
5	9-10	6	8	14
6	10-11	6	4	10
7	11-12	8	9	17
8	12-13	4	5	9
9	13-14	9	8	17
10	14-15	16	17	33
11	15-16	9	8	17
Total		88	82	170

Chart 1: The number of students who were affected by the fire in Labutta Township (Labutta Township Education Office)

## **DONATION**

SEEDS Asia did flash appeal on emergency response on 5<sup>th</sup> February through Websites and Facebook of SEEDS. Request was given at the meeting of MES Central Executive Committee as well. The amount of 4,148,000 Kyat was kindly donated as of 6<sup>th</sup> February and 337,520 ks (till 14<sup>th</sup> February) as total were received for distribution of school kits by well-wishers of Myanmar Engineering Society (MES), professors of universities in Myanmar, our friends living in Myanmar, headquarters of SEEDS Asia and staff members of Myanmar Office of SEEDS Asia.

List of well-wishers is attached as ANNEX.

## **PREPARATION OF SCHOOL KITS**

Myanmar office of SEEDS Asia fully prepared for distribution of school kits by 7<sup>th</sup> February. School kits includes school uniforms, balled pens, HB pencils, erasers, a dozen of pencils, sharpeners, 30-cm plastic rulers, 11 notebooks, and compass set box, all were packed in school bags with logos of MES and SEEDS Asia. It was not easy to purchase those educational items on the day. Most shops were closed because the day of 7<sup>th</sup> February 2016 was Sunday and a Chinese New year. In that circumstance, local staff of SEEDS Asia made great effort on purchasing what we needed in Yangon and making their prices as reasonable as possible by urging shop owners for the immediate needs of 170 students. In addition, an officer of Japan International Cooperation Agency and some local staff of MES voluntarily helped our work to make the preparation much faster. After all, we finished all preparation around the midnight on the day.

Grade	Items in a “school kit”	Unit	Quantity
1-11 (All Grades)	School bag	Piece	1
	Clothes to make 4 school uniforms	Set	1
	HB Pencils with eraser	Dozen	1
	Eraser	Piece	1
	Small Pencil Sharper	Piece	1
	30-cm plastic ruler	Piece	1
	Notebooks	Set	11
Only for 5-11	Compass box	Set	1
	Balled pen	Piece	3

Chart 2: List of items in school kits distributed according to school grades



Picture 4: Preparation of school kits at MES on 7th February, Ms. Sakurai from JICA Myanmar office also helped in preparation



Picture 5: Preparation of school kits at MES on 7th February



Picture 6: A set of School kit



Picture 7: Loading the school kits to MKRC on 8th February to depart to Labutta Township

### DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL KITS

148 study kits were successfully distributed to the students at Labutta Township Education Office on 9<sup>th</sup> February. It was unfortunate that 22 students were not able to come on the day but their bags were left at their teachers with signature to give them later.

Grade	Male		Female		Total	
	Present	Absent	Present	Absent	Present	Absent
1	7	2	5	0	12	2
2	10	0	8	0	18	0
3	2	0	7	0	9	0
4	9	0	3	0	12	0
5	6	0	6	2	12	2
6	6	0	4	0	10	0
7	8	0	8	1	16	1
8	4	0	5	0	9	0
9	9	0	6	2	15	2
10	12	4	12	5	24	9
11	6	3	5	3	11	6
Total	79	9	69	13	148	22

Chart 3: The number of students who were present or absent at the Township Education Office for school kit distribution on 9<sup>th</sup> February



Picture 8: Passing school kits to students of grade 3



Picture 9: Support of school teachers during the school kits distribution

## FINANCIAL REPORT

The following chart shows how all the donation has been spent.

No.	Items	Unit	Unit Price (MMK)	No. of Students	Total Cost (MMK)
1	Bag	Set	10,500	170	1,785,000
2	School uniform	Set	10,500	170	1,785,000
3	Pencil, sharper and eraser set	Set	600	170	102,000
4	Notebooks (10)+1 DRR notebook of SEEDS	Set	1,750	170	297,500
5	Ruler	Piece	125	170	21,250
6	Compass	Set	1,000	117	117,000
7	Balled pen	Set	445	117	52,065
8	Sticker paper for logo	Set	3,800	1	3,800
	A. Total expense				<u>4,163,615</u>
	B. Total Donation on 6 <sup>th</sup>				<u>4,148,000</u>
	C. Total Donation between 7 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup>				<u>337,520</u>
	(B+C)-A: Balance				<u>321,905</u>

Chart 4: Financial report on the collected donation and expense

## FOLLOW-UP ACTION

<For distribution>

On 7<sup>th</sup> February, we were informed by Labutta Township Education Office and school teachers that 29 more students needed support of school kits (they were not listed at the first victim list). To respond to it, we decided to keep collecting donation for the students until 14<sup>th</sup> February and as of 15<sup>th</sup> February 2016 337,520 Kyat had been collected. The collected donation is planned to be spent on purchasing additional 29 school kits to distribute to the students as soon as the preparation is ready.

<For Fire prevention/risk reduction>

There was a request on water pump from Laputta Fire Service Department for effective way of extinguishing fire as well, as they faced difficulties in mobilising the water. Though SEEDS Asia will not be able to support for the big equipment to the department, the need of fire prevention activity at grassroots level was confirmed as any large fire starts from small fire. There were testimonies that fire start from a house among the neighbourhood. If people are well prepared by preventive measures for fire such as a good amount sand and water as stock, fire flap& hook and for extinguishing fire, the fire would not be that much large. One of the CBO members told us that there was a person who thrown away a fire extinguisher into the fire instead of using properly as the person did not how to

use it. SEEDS Asia will continue to conduct disaster risk reduction activity including fire in the Township.

### **APPRECIATION**

SEEDS Asia would like to express our deep sympathy to the people and children who were affected by the large fire in Labutta Township and other area of Myanmar.

Balancing of quality assurance and timely distribution to the all affected is a challenge for aid agencies, however this emergency response could achieve the both by your efforts and contributions. We thank each of your generosity and participating in the operation.

We strongly wishing for people and the children in Labutta to get back normal life as soon as possible and keep pursuing their dreams in future.



Picture 10: a student carrying school kit on 9<sup>th</sup> February

**ANNEX: List of well-wishers**

We would like to acknowledge the individual/organizational donors for making this possible:

U Win Khaing, U Aung Myint, U Myint Pe, U Ko Ko Gyi, Ko Kaung Myat Kyaw and Ma Nilar Aung, Ma Thet Thet Maw, Unknown, Daw Roi Htoi, U Than Aung, SEEDS Asia (HQ), Ma Ei Ei Khine, Ko Aung Thet Paing, Daw Thein Aye, U Khin Maung Htaey, U Myint Soe, U Soe Lwin and MES staff, Ma Khin Nyunt Hlaing, U Ohn Myint, Prof. U Khin Mg Chit, U Soe Lwin Myint, Rental Service of MKRC, U Soe Myint, U Myint Aung, U Myo Thun, U Lin, U Hla Htay, Daw Khin Swe Oo, Daw Khin Sandar Tun, Dr. Mya Mya Khaing, Daw Htay Htay Win, U Tin Latt, U Winn Maung, Daw Aye Aye Maw, Col: Aung Thu Chan (Retd:), Ms. Noriko Sakurai, Mr.Kensuke Otsuyama, Mitsuko Shikada, Shigehiro Shibata, U Soe Pyae Aung, U Myo Myint Myat, U Nyien Chan Oo.

U Kyi Lwin, Daw Hla Hla Aung (as UMS Foundation), U Kyaw San Win, Ms. Mayumi Toritani, Daw Thein Aye

Thank you again for all.