



Thabyay
Education
Network

Building civil society in Myanmar through higher education


Arohana

SCHOLARSHIPS SUPPORTING DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

7th Report for GlobalGiving:

University Scholarships for Students from Burma

Thabyay Education Network, Arohana Scholarship Fund
3rd September 2012

Overview

We at Thabyay Education Network's Arohana Scholarship Fund would like to extend our gratitude to all of you who have donated to our 'University Scholarships For Students From Burma' project on GlobalGiving. So far, we have raised a total of US\$ 49,912 since the 1st September 2010 so we are now more than half way to our target of US\$ 99,000!

After the deduction of GlobalGiving administrative fees, we have now received a total of approximately US\$ 40,320 in disbursements from GlobalGiving for the University Scholarships For Students From Burma project (funds are received over time in Thai Baht at different exchange rates, so USD figures can only be approximately calculated).

By the 17th April 2012, we had disbursed approximately US\$ 36,854 to scholarship awards.

Selection and awards

Since the last report on 17th April, the Arohana Scholarship Fund Committee has made four further awards totalling approximately US\$ 3,100.

The total funds now raised by the 'University Scholarships for Students from Burma' project have therefore supported 41 awards enabling 35 students from marginalized communities across Burma to start or continue their Bachelor's, Master's or PhD studies at universities across Asia.

The recipients of these awards comprise 15 women and 20 men, ranging in age from 19 to 51 (average age of approximately 27), representing nine ethnic groups, studying 27 different majors at 15 different universities in five countries across Asia.

The table below provides detailed information about the new awards made.

Name	Sex	Age	Ethnicity	Subject	University	Level	Type	Award (US\$)
Khin Myat Mon	F	21	Rakhine	Economics and Finance	Hong Kong University	BA	Partial Scholarship	600
Kyaw Min San	M	22	Burman	Electronic and Communication Engineering	Hong Kong University	BA	Partial Scholarship	700
Win Aung	M	22	Kachin	Government and Law	Hong Kong University	BA	Top-up	1,000
Soe Min Tun	M	23	Kachin	English	Hong Kong Polytechnic University	BA	Partial Scholarship	800
							TOTAL	3,100

N.B. Names of award recipients have been changed to protect their identities.

Award Recipient Profiles



Name: **Khin Myat Mon**
Age: **21**
Ethnicity: **Rakhine**
Subject of Study: **Economics and Finance**
Level of Study: **Bachelor's**
Institution of Study: **Hong Kong University**
Award amount: **US\$ 600**

Brief overview of candidate

Khin Myat Mon's academic potential became clear when she obtained four distinctions in her high school exams. On the basis of her success, she went on to study for a Bachelor's in Business Management in Yangon, where she came third in her course in the second year. After graduating, she went on to study for a Master's in Business Administration at a leading Yangon economics institute. Her studies coincided with the significant political and economic changes in Burma, and she realized the central role that business could play in strengthening Burma's economic foundations, as well as the host of new opportunities opening up for the financial sector. Consequently, she decided to apply for a scholarship to study Economics and Finance in Hong Kong.

In her own words:

"For Burma to enjoy long-term economic success, it will be crucial for us to have the human capital, the financial and economic expertise, to be able to successfully manage the current transition and future development. I am studying so that I can contribute to this success."



Name: **Kyaw Min San**
Age: **22**
Ethnicity: **Burman**
Subject of Study: **Electronic and Communications Engineering**
Level of Study: **Bachelor's**
Institution of Study: **Hong Kong University**
Award amount: **US\$ 700**

Brief overview of candidate

Kyaw Min San grew up in Mandalay. His parents wanted him to be a doctor but he chose to follow a different path. From an early age he was mesmerized by electrical inventions such as the light bulb and the television, and in communications technology. He had many questions about these things, but he didn't find the answers at the schools he attended. When he finished high school, his marks were not high enough for him to enrol in medical school. His parents were devastated, but he was secretly pleased to be able to study for a Bachelor's in Engineering in Mandalay instead. Two of Burma's biggest infrastructure problems are power and communications. Much of the population lives without access electricity or telecommunications and even in the bigger town and cities, access is often very limited. Kyaw Min San is acutely aware access to electricity in particular is a core component of economic development. After graduating as an engineer, He plans to use his skills to address this major challenge and work towards improving electrical power infrastructure in Burma.

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In his own words:

“When I was a young, I thought that only the politicians work for their country. The older I get, the more I understand that every citizen has responsibility for their country. I have chosen to be an electronic and communications engineer, and I can use these skills to help Burma develop.”



Name: **Win Aung**
Age: **22**
Ethnicity: **Kachin**
Subject of Study: **Government and Law**
Level of Study: **Bachelor's**
Institution of Study: **Hong Kong University**
Award amount: **US\$ 1,000**

Brief overview of candidate

Win Aung grew up in Myitkyina, the capital city of Kachin state. His father worked as a jade miner. His parents had not had much access to education, but they were determined that their children would have more opportunities and so strived to provide a good education for them. After completing high school, Win Aung studied foreign languages at university in Mandalay, specializing in German. Seeing his community slowly destroyed by decades of civil war and unrest, Win Aung became gradually aware of the links between the political turmoil, war and poverty. He wanted to study these issues further to gain a deeper understanding. After graduation, he won a scholarship to an intensive university preparation school in Yangon that helps bright students from poor background access international higher education. After completing the course, he successfully applied for scholarships to study Government and Law in Hong Kong.

In his own words:

“I want to become an expert in politics so that I can return to Burma and help educate young people about it. I believe that the public awareness about politics and youth participation in political affairs are vital to Burma becoming a developed nation.”



Name: **Soe Min Tun**
Age: **23**
Ethnicity: **Kachin**
Subject of Study: **English**
Level of Study: **Bachelor's**
Institution of Study: **Hong Kong Polytechnic University**
Award amount: **US\$ 800**

Brief overview of candidate

Soe Min Tun was raised in a small farming town in an area of Kachin State ravaged by civil war. His parents were both illiterate. His father worked as a labourer on farms. He was often away from the family, moving from place to place to avoid being forcibly conscripted into one of the military groups. Consequently, his mother had to feed, clothe and school her children largely single-handed. Soe Min Tun's elder brother left school at thirteen in order to help his mother, but Soe Min Tun managed to complete middle school and then went to Myitkyina, the capital of Kachin State, where he completed his high school.

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After graduating in 2007, Soe Min Tun went to Yangon to enrol in a Bachelor of Arts program. In his second year study accompanied two senior students asked on an internship teaching English to children in poor areas of Kachin State. This experience was transformative as it made him realize the impact that he could have on children from poor backgrounds similar to his own. For the next three years, during the summer break, he continued work as a volunteer, teaching English to the children across Kachin State. He also worked as a coordinator for the Bachelor of Arts program, helping students in Kachin State to prepare for the entrance exam. In 2012, Soe Min successfully applied for a scholarship to study English at Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

In his own words:

“When I graduate, I plan to become an English teacher, educational advisor, and activist in Burma to promote upward social mobility, especially in rural areas of Kachin State. I will provide open English classes, and open a education center in Myitkyina to advise students about scholarships and study abroad opportunities.”

Future Plans

The Arohana Scholarship Fund (ASF) is expecting further funds to be disbursed in late September by GlobalGiving, at which point further scholarship awards will be made.

Closing Statement

We hope that this report shows clearly the potential of these scholarship recipients to become catalysts for incremental social change in Burma, and that you can appreciate the direct link between quality higher education and grassroots development in communities in Burma. We also hope that it demonstrates that even the smallest contribution of US\$ 10 can make a difference in terms of keeping a Burmese scholarship student in university education.

We would like to reiterate our gratitude to all of you who have helped raise funds for this project by making donations and spreading the word. We hope that this report will inspire you to continue to support us in the future. The beneficiaries of these awards, the students, have individually expressed their gratitude to us for the support they have received. We would like to pass on their thanks to you.

If you have any questions about this report, or about our work, please do get in touch.

With our best wishes,



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How you can help

The Arohana Scholarship Fund urgently needs your help to raise funds to support scholarships.

1. Donate



You can donate to Arohana's 'University Scholarships for Students from Burma' project through GlobalGiving and JustGiving.

GlobalGiving US site (offers tax relief to US taxpayers):
www.globalgiving.org/projects/university-scholarships-for-students-from-burma

GlobalGiving UK site (offers Gift Aid to UK taxpayers):
www.globalgiving.co.uk/pr/6200/proj6188a.html

JustGiving UK site (offers Gift Aid to UK taxpayers):
www.justgiving.com/project/1777763

Residents of other countries can donate through these sites, but cannot benefit from tax relief or Gift Aid. GlobalGiving accepts credit cards, Paypal and cheques. JustGiving accepts credit cards and Paypal. Funds received via GlobalGiving will be wholly used to support scholarship awards for students from Burma, excepting an administrative fee levied by GlobalGiving when funds are transferred to Thabyay.

Quote

"When I think back about my past, it is almost unbelievable that I have come so far from the difficulties of my childhood. When I return to Burma, I want to work to make sure that other young people do not have to face the same difficulties that I did."

Htet Aung, Scholarship Recipient



2. Fundraise

We are keen to hear from anyone who would be interested to support us in our fundraising efforts. We need local volunteers around the world to spread the word and organize fundraising events on our behalf. If you would be interested to support us in this way, please contact us:

Email: development@thabyay.org

Websites: www.arohanascholarships.org
www.thabyay.org

Thabyay Education Network is a registered non-profit foundation in Thailand.

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**a single
flame
can light
a thousand
candles**