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A message from the Founders



We're pleased to introduce our Report for the year July 2020 – June 2021, although this was a very mixed time for us.

COVID-19 has continued to affect Myanmar, but the Junta's voiding of the February election results, leading to the Civil Disobedience Movement, and the formation of the National Unity Government, has had deep effects.

The relative isolation of our High School has shielded it from the worst of the unrest.



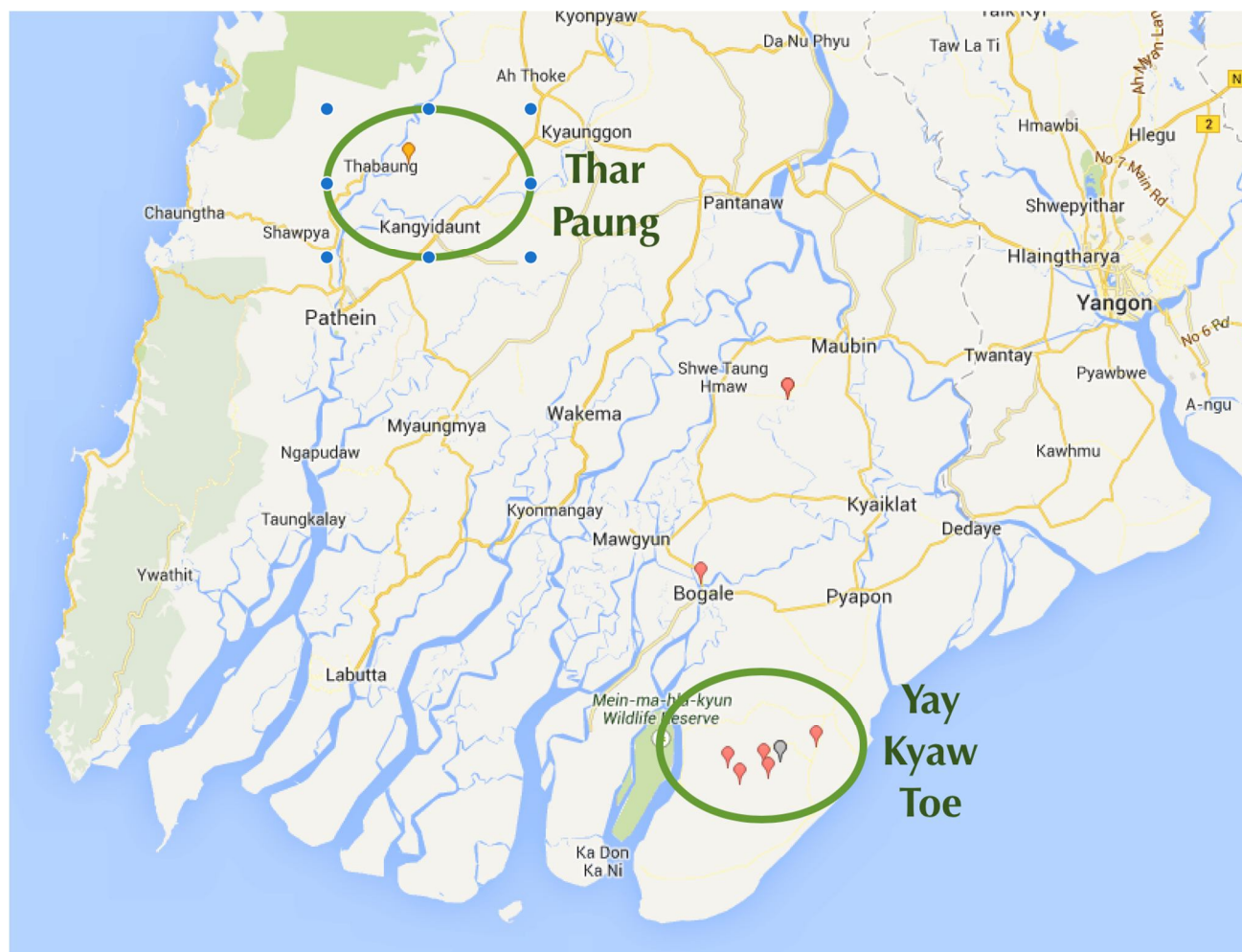
May Tha-Hla



Jon Wilkinson

Helping The Burmese Delta

We were formed in the aftermath of the catastrophic Cyclone Nargis, which devastated the Delta of the Irrawaddy River in 2008, and our strategy has developed since that time. We began by distributing emergency aid, but soon realised that the areas in which we were working, suffered from enduring poverty and great deprivation.



As a small charity, we needed to specialise, and we decided to focus geographically on an especially remote district (the Yay Kyaw Toe Village Tract), which was virtually ignored by the previous military government, and other NGOs, alike. This was an area with many small villages, no roads, no healthcare, its schools largely destroyed by the storm, severe shortages of clean water, and very few livelihood options other than paddy farming. In 2014, we opened another area in the North of the Delta in Thar Paung township, again extremely poor, but also subject to severe flooding.

Education

Our core activity remains **Education**. We started by rebuilding Primary Schools destroyed by Nargis, and in 2013 built and opened an almost unique Social High School which for the first time gave poor local children the chance to complete their school education and qualify for University and Training Colleges. We also run scholarship programmes both for the academically best performers, and for the especially needy.

When we build a primary school, and the village supplies 3 acres of land, and labour to assist our carpenters, it can apply to the local authority to be adopted. All of our schools have been successful, and then receive at least one qualified teacher. The building becomes the property of the school.

Health

Even now, there are no doctors or hospitals within several hours' travel, and the villagers are too poor to afford the boat fares. The only possible solution was to train suitable villagers as health workers. We have adapted training solutions widely used in the developing world, and have carried out general paramedic programmes, and training of Traditional Birth Attendants. These have been given by a combination of local doctors and nurses, and midwives from the UK.

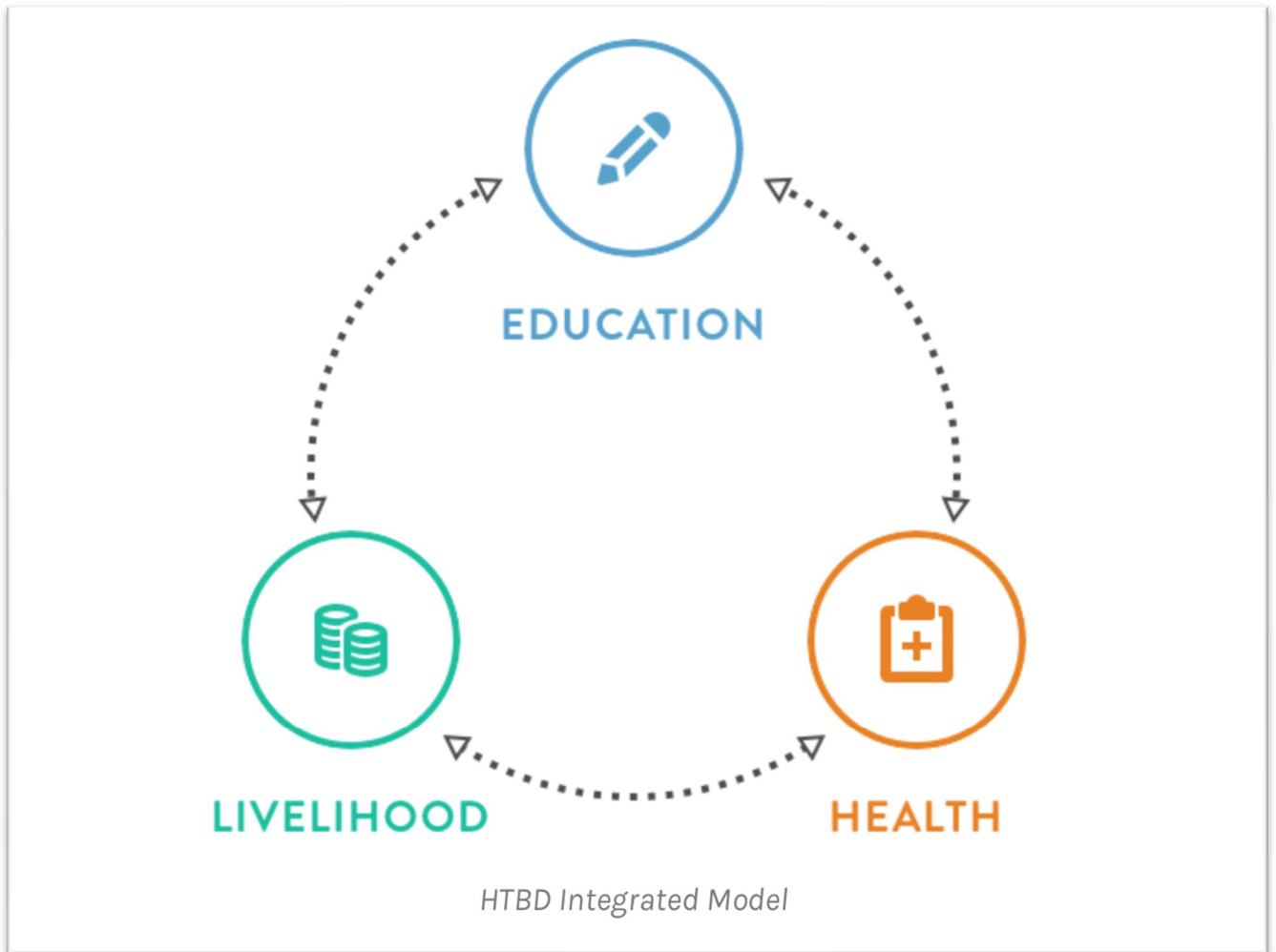
As mentioned above, many health problems arise from the lack of clean water, and great ignorance about hygiene. We therefore instituted a programme to drill tube wells for the villages, and where needed, storage for rain water from the monsoon season.

Objectives

Our formal objectives are:

"To relieve poverty and sickness, to preserve and protect health, and to advance education, among the people of Myanmar who are in need."

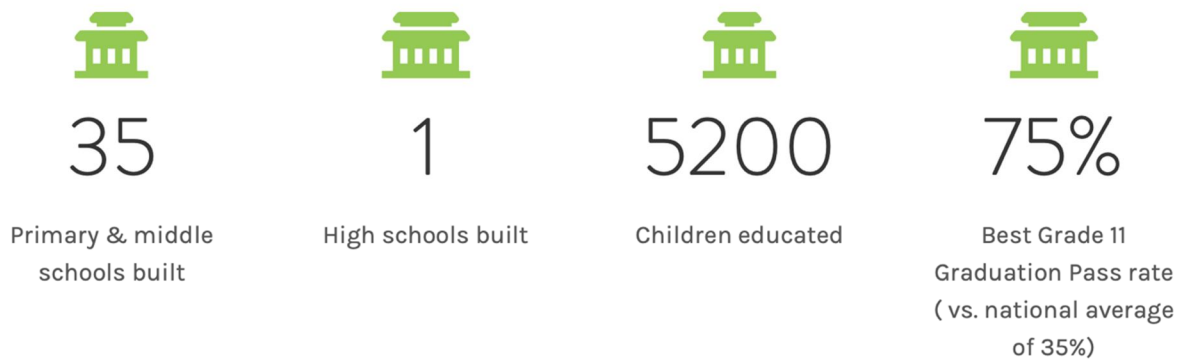
We approach these through focusing on the three areas described above. They are not distinct. For instance, if parents earn more money, they are better able to keep their children in school. Better health enables parents to work more. We picture this as follows:



Impact

Total people helped since 2008: Over 70,000

Education



Health



49

Community Health
Workers trained



104

Traditional Birth
Attendants trained



26

Villages with clean
water wells



7

Treatment of severe
facial clefts

Livelihoods



45300

People receiving
emergency aid



115

Small farmers
receiving rice seeds



20

Villagers receiving
pigs to breed

Review of the year 2020 - 2021

The last year has been one of great heartbreak in Myanmar, as the twin calamities of COVID-19 and the military coup ravaged the country. Much of the country has joined in a Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), which saw civil servants, doctors, lawyers and, importantly for us, teachers and medical staff withdraw their cooperation from the government. This led not only to the closure of these types of operation, but also a military reprisal which has seen extensive violence meted out across the country. In the Delta region, there has, mercifully, been less violence than in some other parts of the country, especially the North and in Yangon, for which HTBD must be grateful. However, teachers have been afraid to attend schools, lest they be associated either with the military - and attacked by the resistance, or with the CDM - and attacked by the military. Schoolchildren and their parents have been similarly frightened. Amidst all this disruption, the government has also been closing schools and limiting movement due to the rapid spread of COVID-19 in the country.

HTBD have sought to remain steadfast friends and supporters to our communities in the Delta region in whatever way HTBD are able, although what HTBD have been able to achieve this year seems paltry in comparison to happier times.

Education

Supporting our teachers – HTBD do not have the funds to provide full furlough payments as in other countries, but HTBD have tried to help our teachers to keep their heads above water (and food on their plates) by paying a portion of their salaries, despite the lack of income from school fees and our tremendous donors this year. At the start of the period, HTBD were able to provide 40% of salary, but this has since been reduced. Our headmaster, U Kyaw Seya, has been growing vegetables and selling them to raise funds and to help feed some teachers and pupils, too.

Supporting our pupils

When the schools have been closed due to the coup, rather than the pandemic, HTBD have managed to run some ad-hoc reading group classes in the street and HTBD have supplemented this with online training, to prepare some of our older pupils for office jobs. HTBD have also distributed books received from UNICEF to our current pupils and have sent additional books from other donors to the villages where HTBD have in the past built schools.

Preparing for re-opening – Whilst the schools have been shut, HTBD have stepped up the maintenance of the High School.

Healthcare training

Since the start of the coup on 1st February 2021, healthcare staff have been targeted by the military and their supporters and doctors and nurses have been served with arrest warrants for providing life-saving healthcare to protestors. In these circumstances, and with travel both tightly restricted and dangerous, HTBD have deemed it too hazardous to continue our work training traditional birth attendants, but HTBD hope to be able to resume this when things are calmer.

Our Team

This consists of:

U Phyo Hlaing Bwa, Country Director

U Kyaw Zeya, Education Officer

U Aung Chan Myae Hlaing, Health Officer

There are no paid staff in the UK.

Financial Review

In the 2020 - 2021 year we received total income of £42,922 (2019 – 20 £27,674), and our expenditure was £36,817 (2019 – 20 £51,867). At the end of the 2020 -2021 year our cash funds totalled £55,638.

Reserves Policy

We retain an operational reserve of unrestricted funds in order to mitigate risks defined in the Risk Register, and the amount of this is reviewed annually. Our target for this is currently £40,000.

There are other restricted funds which are not part of the policy, but which refer to those dedicated to specific projects (for instance building a school or drilling wells). These are carried forward until the completion of the project.

The Year Ahead

The intensity of the violence engendered by the coup appears to be lessening somewhat, but the country appears to be becoming more united against the military, which suggests that real peace still remains distant. Many thousands of people languish in detention unjustly and at least 1,200 have been killed by the coup perpetrators. HTBD see no near-term end to this situation. Since the end of the period under review, Russia has invaded Ukraine and the military rulers of Myanmar have supported the aggressors, further isolating the country.

These challenges have decimated the economy and the need of Myanmar people for our support is greater than ever.

Key Policies

Risk management

There are a multitude of potential risks in operating in remote areas in a country like Myanmar, and we believe the best protection against these is to work with reliable partners who are regularly supervised. We phase funding against agreed detailed budgets, and always inspect the work. All timber is purchased from official sources. Wherever possible payments are made by direct bank transfer. In 2016 – 17 we developed a formal risk register. Each risk is reviewed annually by the Board.

Inherent risk	Mitigation
Governance risks	
Lack of succession planning	
Potential negligence claims against trustees	The charity has taken appropriate insurance policies.
Excessive accumulation of capital/reserves	The charity has little spare cash and spends any excess over policy reserves annually.
Insufficient reserves / accounts falling below policy reserves	The charity has been successful in raising funds via events such as The Big Give each year, even during times of turmoil in Myanmar.
Operational risks	
Inadequate Safeguarding of children	Maintain robust rules, especially for High School boarders. Train staff (including teachers and wardens). Ensure children have access to independent reporting of issues.
Loss of Headmaster at Ye Kyaw Toe	
Losing Myanmar Director	The Trust has successfully changed senior staff in Myanmar previously and believes that the appeal of the cause still remains sufficient to attract good people there.
Insufficient admin support in UK	
Potential lack of teachers for High School(s)	Headmaster is constantly recruiting. Charity pays hardship allowances for remote area working.
Financial risks	
Forex variance	Monitor exchange rate movements and convert monies when advantageous.
Inflation in cost of salaries and other items leads to deterioration of services the charity is able to provide.	Our reserves policy should enable the charity to maintain its service levels.
Loss of income/donor base reduction	Continued marketing activity to raise funds.
Error in documentation dealing with payments/receipts	Receipts requested on donation transfers
Insufficient understanding of Myanmar by banks leading to account closure	Frequent communications with the banks.
External risks	
Turbulent economic/ political environment	The charity continues to alternative solutions.
Ensuring safety of staff and visitors	copy from report
Pandemic and/or natural disaster in Myanmar	The charity obeys all government orders to close on medical grounds and has provided protective equipment to staff and children during the COVID pandemic. This has enabled activity to continue.
Loss of auditor and no candidates to replace them	The Board of Trustees have a series of alternative candidates able to audit the accounts.
Compliance risks	
Breaking/ falling foul of local laws / regulations	The Trustees keep abreast of changes in Myanmar legislation and relay significant items to the Board for noting or action.
Emerging risks	
Famine induced by interruptions to supply chains from war and pestilence.	The Delta region is remote within Myanmar and able to provide much of its own food.
Global recession reduces donors' ability to support the charity.	Fund raising, marketing and PR.
Climate change	The charity was started to respond to the impact of Cyclone Nargis and the Board believe that the need for its work will increase as climate events become more frequent. Donors are also likely to respond well to climate-related requests for funding.

Fundraising

We aim to do all our fundraising in a respectful manner. We never share contact details with third parties, and communicate very largely electronically, and with limited frequency. We do not contact people from cold lists. We implemented the changes required by GDPR.

Our funds have been raised through various sources.

We have built a database of individuals, many existing personal and business contacts of the founders, and progressively many more donors and friends who have come into contact through the website, events, and word-of-mouth.

In addition to these many individual supporters, the following are current or past Corporate, Trust, Governmental, and other organisational supporters.

Acumen	Laura Case Trust
Amazon Papyrus	Meetings Industry UK
Australian Embassy, Yangon	Northwick Trust
Bonamy Finch	Oldfield Partners
Building Schools for Burma	Omidyar Network
Daw Aung San Suu Kyi Trust	Panoramic Journeys
Educational Empowerment	Ravenscourt Park Prep School
Incite	St Ives
Just Trust	The Sausage Man
Kantar	Western Union Foundation

We have raised funds through the holding of Burmese Food, Crafts, and Entertainment Fairs in London and Oxford.

We have enjoyed the proceeds of sponsored activities, such as marathons, triathlons, and climbing the Three Peaks and Kilimanjaro.

We have participated in The Big Give's matched funding challenge each year from 2009, and also received a grant from The Funding Network.

Governance and Management

Helping The Burmese Delta is constituted as a Trust, with the deed dated 24th June 2008. It is registered with the Charity Commission (no. 1124774). The first Trustees were the two founders of the charity, Jonathan

Wilkinson and May Tha-Hla, and Roger Banks, a retired senior businessman with extensive experience of Asia. Roger Banks resigned from the Board on December 28th, 2018.

The Board was stable throughout the 2020 – 21 year, and comprised:

Sally Macdonald, Jeremy Ogden, May Tha-Hla, Nyein Torley and Jon Wilkinson

The Trustees meet at least three times a year and are in regular phone/email communication in between. The founders visit Myanmar to inspect the projects and plan new ones, at least twice a year, but usually in practice make three or four trips. We exert a high degree of control. May Tha-Hla, who is bi-lingual and bi-cultural, visits all projects personally, and a local senior lawyer, under our instructions, controls funds in Myanmar. Our objective is to be the most efficient and effective charity possible. The founders handle the day-to-day management of the charity. They work closely with a number of volunteers in the UK who assist particularly with fundraising, PR, and design.

Registration in Myanmar

We have officially registered a local charity in Myanmar, under the name Pyin Nyar Tha Hla Social Welfare Organisation. Pyin Nyar means 'education'. This can receive donations from foreign organisations for projects. There is a local Board which manages its affairs under our guidance. Further details of PNTH are available on request.

Thanks

The Trustees would like to thank the many people who have given their time and efforts to help in our work. We would particularly mention:

- The staff of HTBD Myanmar/Pyin Nyar Tha Hla for so successfully managing our projects
- Daw Tin Ohnmar Tun for acting as Chair of Pyin Nyar Tha Hla
- www.34sp.com for hosting the website gratis
- Ma Aye Mon Thu, Ko Khin Maung Htay, and others for their help with fundraising

Declaration

The Trustees have approved this Report and Accounts on November 11th, 2022.



Jon Wilkinson

Chair of the Trustees

**Independent examiner's report
to the trustees of
Helping The Burmese Delta**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 30th June 2021 which are set out on pages 14 to 15.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Christy Lau FCCA CTA DChA
Slade & Cooper Limited, Chartered Certified Accountants
Beehive Mill, Jersey Street
Ancoats Manchester, M4 6JG

November 23rd, 2022

Helping the Burmese Delta
Receipts and Payments Accounts
for the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021 £	2020 £
Receipts		
Donations		30,212
Donations - UK Individuals and Corporate	24,772	-
Donations - Overseas Corporate	2,700	-
Donations - Overseas Other	1,467	-
Income tax repayments	13,730	1,460
Investment interest	253	-
Grant income	-	(4,000)
Bank interest	-	2
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total receipts	42,922	27,674
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Payments		
	2021	2020
Direct		
Education	16,717	35,666
Health	2,589	1,722
Livelihoods	-	72
Myanmar Salaries & Costs	16,186	12,683
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	35,492	50,143
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Support		
Fund Raising	-	239
Travel	-	745
Insurance Trustees Liability	596	568
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	596	1,552
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Finance		
Bank Fees	394	172
Currency Exchange Difference	333	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	727	172
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total payments	36,815	51,867
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net receipts / (payments) for the year	6,107	(24,193)
Bank and cash balances at start of year	49,531	73,724
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Bank and cash balances at end of year	55,638	49,531
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

**Helping the Burmese Delta
Statement of Assets and Liabilities
for the year ended 30 June 2021**

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Bank and cash balances		55,638	49,531
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Investment assets			
Manchester Building Society (Restricted fund)		1,523	465
One Savings Bank (Restricted fund)		2,827	2,576
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		4,350	3,041
		<hr/>	<hr/>

Notes

- a) The investment assets were given to the charity so that the interest can be used to fund an annual scholarship for children from the delta region to attend the Ye Kyaw Toe high school. The income from them is restricted for this use. However, during the period of closure due to COVID and the coup, the income has, with agreement with the donor, been used to benefit the school, its staff and pupils by whatever means has been possible in these extraordinary times.
- b) The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011. As a lower-income charity under section 133 of the 2011 Act, the trustees have elected to prepare the charity's financial statements using the Receipts & Payments basis.

Approved by the trustees on November 11th, 2022 and signed on their behalf by:

May Tha-Hla (Trustee)