
The Past Experience and Future Goals

Over the past 6 years, I have made progressive career growth starting as an Administrative Clerk at a Township level in Mon State and to my current position working as Project Associate with UNDP Myanmar for “Earthquake Resilience Project”. While I started my career in administration and finance with agencies such as IOM, UNDP and ADB, I was keen to work in program so that I can learn new areas of work and do a meaningful contribution to my country. Given my undergraduate degree in English, I was committed to learn more on development issues and in 2016, I enrolled for a part time course on Master of Public Administration at Meiktila University of Economics while also looking for jobs in development. Currently I am working with UNDP and I am learning more on development issues and most importantly able to understand the issues at the community level. While the course provided me good opportunity to understand development related issues and also apply some of it in my work, however due to less or limited option for specialized subjects I had to take only the courses offered. In addition, I have a keen interest in the area of research and development there was very little discussions during the course.

During my work with IOM, I was responsible for handling budget calculation for contribution to migrant workers in border region of Thailand. During my research study at MPA program, my research is studying on effects of internal migration on economic conditions of migrants. Hence, I have to refer recorded data and survey report from official data sources for my work and my research. I understand that the limitation is scarce actual recorded data. In the post-independence period of Myanmar, censuses for housing and population were undertaken in 1973, 1983 and April 2014. The latest census was conducted after more than three decades without a Population and Housing Census. Information is necessary for planning and evidence-based decision-making for every level.

I am executive member of Academy Charity House since 2017. Founder and executive members collect the cash from the donors all over the country. We observed the needy places before donating in every month basic. Among the potential places, we identified the most vulnerable place to be noted according to organisation’s rules. Based on the cooperating closely with communities, I strongly feel the need for ensuring the communities and empowering them with effective knowledgeable practice.

My interest is to further enhance my knowledge and skills in relation to research and development studies so I can work in development sector. I feel this will be a major area of work, as Myanmar is going through development reforms. By having new skills and my experience in international organizations, I feel I can further contribute for policy development and working with research. I hope survey and research that I conducted will assist policy makers and international aid organization to formulate more effective policies and action plans. If I have a chance for getting full scholarship and have opportunity to study majoring in Development Studies, it will be a bid investment for not only for me but also my community and country as I will come back to my country after my study and give contribution on development works through applying my knowledge which I gain.

Myanmar face challenges in terms of the four capital stocks-physical, human, institutional and

social. Sustainable development depends on capacity and availability of human resources. In Myanmar, level of migration has been increasing in recent years owing to climate change and disasters. Myanmar is one of the disaster-prone areas in the Asia and its effect is directly on landless people and farmer who depend on the farmers for their livelihoods. Many people are out migrating to border region of Thailand and China for their job purposes, those are from delta areas that are severely affected by cyclone Nargis in 2008 and dry zone of Myanmar that is highly affected by flood in recent years (starting from 2015). Some migrants are often employed in risky jobs and they face different factors of challenges: access to public services, discrimination, violations, exploitation, harassments, social tensions, physical security in work and living place. Although migration might include the potential dangers of exploitation and human trafficking, migrant workers accept these risks for opportunity to improve the quality of life and financial situation for their families at the places of origin. Although there are some research paper and debate for other sectors, there is no much research and recorded data for migration especially internal migration. But, internal migration rate is increasing and it becomes future expectation for the poor who couldn't afford to go oversea as an international migrant.

Thus, I hope to study more deeply to seek good practices and challenges in development issues from other countries. I believe that students from different countries can share knowledge, practice and experiences, an academic arm of community-based efforts for sustainable development. I would love to learn research methodology, migration and effect of globalization on developing countries

The government of Myanmar adopted reforms of laws and regulations including the Social Security Law, 2012 and the Employment and Skills Development Law, 2013. International Organisation for Migration, Internal Labor Organisation and other international NGOs are working and supporting to the government for the affairs of migrants and labors. However, there are many reforms, there are more laws to be endorsed such as new occupational and safety law. Although Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law (2005) and minimum wage law was adopted in 2013 in Myanmar, public awareness and applying cases are very few within migrant workers in informal sector especially in rural areas.

If I would have a chance to learn master program in development, I will be the part of promoting these laws and disseminating the laws and their rights for awareness raising for migrant workers. The current problems are that they don't know how to report, to whom to report and what conditions are needed to report even if they encounter exploitation. They have limited knowledge of what are their rights as well. I will be working for developing and promoting safe internal recruitment mechanisms by assessing the reasons of official job placement channels that government and organization recommend are not commonly used. I will work to increase labour inspection activities by addressing certain problems prevalent among migrants in informal sector in certain areas where exploitation is prevalent; trafficking prevention activities aimed at vulnerable segments of the population through research. The voices and challenges of migrants are coming out and would be benefit for referring and taking into consideration of policy making for vulnerable community. Compiling these result findings and factors can help policy makers for taking into consideration of legislation and institutional capacity building support, labour related policies, targeted policies and programmes for vulnerable community. My contribution will also encourage new forms of cooperation between government departments, private sectors and other stakeholders.

Before I joined UNDP, I worked at Asian Development Bank with fix-term staff contract. At ADB,

it is difficult opportunity to receive that kind of staff contract and position with competitive salary and other benefits. But I applied service contract position for 18 months project at UNDP. My former colleagues, senior and friends suggested me to work at ADB since offered job is short term and current job is good for long term with more benefits. I changed my job to UNDP although it is risky for me who is main supporter of my family. On the other hand, I thought that working style at ADB is administrative and operational side from supporting role and I can't work in development areas enthusiastically. I love to work heartily for educating vulnerable for preparedness and response of disaster. One of my main responsibilities is knowledge building and knowledge sharing. Myanmar has a high risk of cyclone, storms, floods, earthquakes, tsunami, forest fire and landslides which causes loss of lives and destroys infrastructure and livelihoods of people across the country. This project is building resilience in earthquake prone areas in Myanmar through better preparedness and response as Myanmar lies on one of the two main earthquake zones of the world.

I was involved in development of IEC materials and outreach for awareness raising for community, school children and government personnel via TV channels by developing scripts for, radios channels, books, posters and internet. While communities in Myanmar are aware of flood and cyclones their knowledge and understanding earthquake is low and given the situation, I was closely engaged in attaining the following results

- Undertaking KAP survey on earthquake awareness and safety.
- Broadcasting three video programs and thirteen radio programs (targeting children, rural and urban).
- Development of earthquake simulation booklet, school safety booklet, building safety booklet, comic/story book, quiz chart, awareness messages in ethnic languages
- Coordinating and organizing awareness and trainings in 694 schools identified as vulnerable across 6 States / Regions of Myanmar
- Training of 192 volunteers in the schools
- Upgrading and dissemination of DAN (Disaster Alert Notification) mobile application among government staff through respective States/Regions

Based on the working with communities, I strongly feel the need for ensuring the communities and empowering them with relevant information. In particular working with the children's in the schools along with Department of Basic Education and the teachers, my sense of purpose working in development and risk reduction has been further strengthened. I see Children's can be a change agent in their family and in the community if we can engage and guide them. When compared with my previous work it is significant given the extensive coordination work and most importantly it has laid the foundation for long term engagement for earthquake preparedness in Myanmar. Each position of my previous works had its own challenges and I have contributed to the work, my current work at UNDP has been more fulfilling, as over the past one year.