

## Annual Report 2023

Three years after the military coup in February 2021, the democratic opposition has intensified its resistance against the army and large parts of the country are under control of the opposition. However, only the military junta has aircrafts at its disposal, which it uses relentlessly against the opposition and civilians.

The civil war made travelling in the country more difficult and sometimes impossible. The military junta, the various ethnic groups and the so-called PDFs (People Defense Forces) secure their areas of influence militarily and control access strictly.

The continuation of our programs was difficult, but with the dedicated and fearless work of the Good Shepherd Sisters Myanmar, we were able to continue our foundation work in Myanmar.

### 1. Leadership and Vocational Training for Girls, Mandalay

We were able to continue the vocational training program for girls mostly undisturbed in 2023. We started the vocational training program in 2006 with the Good Shepherd Sisters in Yangon and moved the program to Mandalay in 2016. Since we started the training in Mandalay, 373 girls have successfully participated in our 12-month training program despite corona and the military coup.



The 52 girls, Sisters and staff of the 8th year of the vocational training program 2023/2024

In recent years, we focused on sewing training and tailoring and on a school training program for high school students with English and computer lessons. Our school program follows the curriculum of Burmese schools. Our teachers are fully trained

and qualified. The trained teachers feel safer with us than at the public schools under the control of the military. To prove their success in school, our students take part in the final examinations at private high schools online and receive their certificates. We finance the program together with the Leverkusen foundation “Wir Machen Schule”, which has joined funding the vocational training since the Corona years.

The new training year began in July 2023 with 52 female students. In July 2023, 21 young women started their sewing training, 10 students began their training as hairdressers and beauticians and 21 young women started school and computer lessons. They all lived and studied at the training center in Mandalay Myothit for one year until June 2024. Here, they learned their professional skills and received a comprehensive life skills training. In June 2024, the 21 high school students completed the high school graduation class and a parallel computer training program. After high school, the girls continue their education at private schools or online.



School lessons for the Highschool students



Computer training



Sewing and tailoring



Like all training courses, the sewing and tailoring class lasts 12 months. After graduation, trainees will start a 6-month advanced program or directly return to their villages.



Our training program for hairstyling and make-up is particularly popular. In the 8th year, 10 students took part in the basic course, who can continue their training with a further year of professional development in the hairdressing salons in Mandalay.

The hairstyling program in Mandalay has been supported by the German company Schwarzkopf for several years. Schwarzkopf supports us by providing local training. In the years before Corona, Schwarzkopf sent volunteer hairdressers to Mandalay for a 2-week hair styling course to teach our students Western hairstyling. Corona and the military coup have prevented the physical dispatch of international hairdressers to Mandalay. Instead, the Schwarzkopf Thailand branch is supporting the girls with a 2-week online course.



Hair Styling Class in our Training Center in Mandalay



Practical training ... and online lessons: Hair styling

## 2. Children Protection Center (CPC), Myit Nge

After the military coup d'état, the security situation throughout the country deteriorated. Children in particular suffered, as all kindergartens and schools were closed and family incomes fell drastically due to unemployment and inflation. People

In Need (PIN) supported the Good Shepherd Sisters in starting and expanding the Children Protection Center (CPC) in Myit Nge. The Children Protection Center is located in Myit Nge, about 20 kilometers south of Mandalay. Almost all of the inhabitants there worked at the state railroad workshop “Myanma Train Engine Factory”. When the military took power in 2021, all railroad workers went on strike and joined the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM). The striking workers lost their jobs and income and were evicted from their homes.

Since 2021, we have supported the Sisters to develop the plot of land measuring around 4,500 square meters. After building sanitary facilities and a security fence, we helped the Sisters to finance the conversion and expansion of the former chicken coops. In April 2022, the military forcibly evicted all striking workers and their families from the railroad workers' homes, destroying and bulldozing the houses. People In Need and “Wir Machen Schule” helped to meet the increased need for schooling and nutrition.

For the past three years, around 120 children have been cared for and educated during the day at the CPC. The children can play and receive lunch. In addition to the children from Myit Nge, 20 underage girls have also been given safe accommodation at the CPC. The girls had fled to Mandalay from the civil war turmoil in Shan State and were living in the slums with no income.



Line up for lunch



Lunch for All





Team building and psychosocial support activities at Myit Nge

In order to better understand the living conditions of the children, the sisters have increased their visits to families and household communities in the surrounding villages. This enables us to identify the children most in need and also to help impoverished families.



Outreach visits by the sisters to families in and around Myit Nge

### 3. Community-based Learning Program (CbLP), Mandalay

In 2023, the Good Shepherd Sisters continued the informal teaching program in the slums of Mandalay with the help of People In Need and “Wir Machen Schule”. After all schools in Mandalay were closed in 2021 and 2022 due to corona, the Good Shepherd Sisters initiated an informal school education program in private housings together with parents, teachers and community leaders. The Sisters continued this program in 2023 in three slum areas. After the reopening of public schools, they reduced the number of slums to two slum areas. A total of 90 and later 60 children were taught by trained teachers; the children receive a daily lunch and basic medical care. The daily lunch is cooked in a central kitchen and distributed to the various school locations. Thanks to the good cooperation with the local communities, the

community-based learning program functions successfully and largely unhindered by official requirements.



Informal School in St. John's District, Mandalay



Lunch for All



Graduation ceremonies in kindergarten and elementary school



#### **4. Hla Day: Shop for design and handicrafts, Yangon**

Hla Day was founded in 2016 as a non-profit business in Yangon, the store sells Burmese handicraft products to tourists and expats. The proceeds of the store provide an income to destitute and socially disadvantaged artisans who struggle with disability, discrimination, marginalization and poverty. The income from the shop can provide a livelihood to the artisans and their families.

Following Corona and the subsequent military coup, international tourism to Myanmar came to a complete standstill and the number of expats living in Myanmar fell dramatically. As a result, Hla Day's income collapsed and Hla Day had to survive 2 ½ years without profit with negative cash flow. Hla Day employees worked hard to return a small profit in 2023.





Visit by FONDACIO at Hla Day

We will do everything we can to keep Hla Day alive. Since the military coup three years ago, Hla Day has become a beacon of hope for the small remaining foreign community. Hla Day has also become an important and often the only source of income for our Burmese staff and artisans.



Artisans and Staff at Hla Day

People In Need – Gerhard Baumgard Stiftung  
[www.peopleinneed.de](http://www.peopleinneed.de); [www.p-i-n.org](http://www.p-i-n.org)  
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