

Mettā In Action Update (4)

November 2019

“I Can’t Say No!”

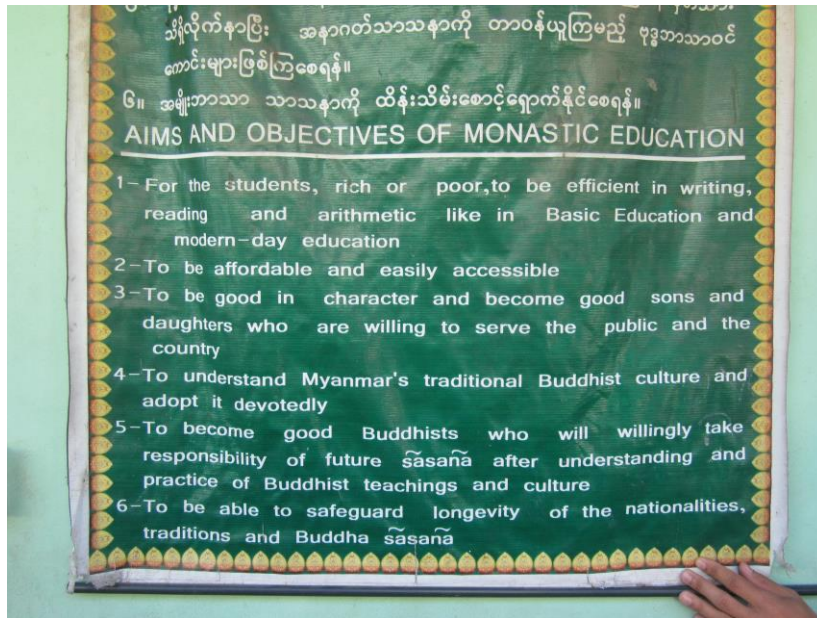
Support for Monastic Schools



Thanks to your *amazing* generosity, this year we were able to offer the equivalent of over 22,000 USD to monastic schools, significantly up from almost 13,000 USD last year. It brings so much joy to make these offerings, for so many reasons – the main ones being the thousands of kids who get an education because these schools exist, the over 100 teachers whose salaries your dana pays, and the nuns and monks who can sleep because they know the bills will be paid. And the main beneficiaries are many many *girls*. Education for women is an engine for empowerment, and the nunnery schools in particular are on the frontline of the effort to offer this priceless gift to as many girls as possible. *So* many kids’ lives are lifted up thanks to these schools - and we cannot know the benefits that will result!

One of the heads of school mentioned to us that she has seen how children and people in Myanmar have changed over the last few years – always on the phone, or reading something online. She said it has really been a change for the worse. Faced with these many changes, all the principals and teachers

of these schools work incredibly hard not only to teach essential skills to the kids, but also to instill values that will serve them well in their adult lives.



So here is a brief snapshot of the main schools your donations have supported this year:

Ananda Mettā School (headed by U Indaka; K-8; 421 students, 5 teachers)

It is rare that a monastic school gets permission to open a high school, which discriminates against ordained kids because they are not allowed to attend government high school in robes. Though they can study independently, but everyone still has to sit the government exam. So U Indaka has already used our donations from last year for one new classroom building, and will continue to expand so that he can get permission to open a high school. We have seen his astonishing skill and have no doubt he will succeed.



Appamada School (headed by Daw Sumanacari; K-7; 336 students, 10 teachers)

We offered about 3000 USD at Appamada, primarily for teacher salaries.

When we got there this year it was lunchtime, so we walked into a dynamic and noisy courtyard, with dozens of kids playing in the courtyard and more buying from a small shop in front of the school.

Many of the students live in the crowded rental housing nearby, the rest are nuns from Appamada and the nunneries nearby.



Aung Yedanar Shwe Oh School (headed by U Indobhasa; 1-7; 248 students, 9 teachers)

This is the most remote school we support, in the middle of vast rice paddies East of Bago; we offered about 3300 USD for improving access to the school and to continue the construction of the main building that. The local villagers are too poor to support the school with money, though they do offer food. When we asked “How do you raise the money you need to pay the teachers?” He simply chuckled and said, “I get dizzy.” Sometimes he has to borrow cash from his devotees, and pays it back when he can. In spite of all the work he said, “I can’t say no!” He was born in this area, and this is his way of giving back. He feels so happy to see the children learn, because it’s good for them, good for the villages, and good for the country. He said, “As long as we are wandering around in samsara, we cannot be guaranteed a human life, so I want use this one to help people.”



Mettā Yuwar School (headed by Daw Yuzana; K-10; 490 students, 30 teachers)

We offered almost 5000 USD for teacher salaries: she needs 39 lakh per month for salaries! This is her biggest daily worry; she pays her teachers quite a bit more than most monastic schools, and consequently many of the students get successful exam results. And she is one of the rare monastic schools offering instruction to 10th standard; about 10% of her students who take school-leaving exams pass (which is a very high pass rate), and several are now going to university as a result.



Paññasinghi School (headed by Daw Paññacari; K-4; 186 students, 5 teachers)

We offered about 2300 USD both for teacher salaries and for a pump so that their shallow well will be useable. The atmosphere here is both familial and happy. We were treated to a rehearsal of a recital, with a teacher coaching the kids in the graceful and witty art of traditional dance. Upstairs, away from the hubbub, four of the resident nuns were studying hard for their upcoming 10th Standard examinations.



Zaloon Parahita School (headed by Daw Ayesinghi; K-8, 564 students, 55 teachers and 2 assistant teachers)

Zaloon Parahita School has a good reputation, and many students walk almost an hour to attend class here: Daw Ayesinghi told us that many students from this school get A's on their exams, which is rare. She has at times had to take out a (fortunately interest-free) loan to pay the teachers, so most of your offering of about 4600 USD went towards teacher salaries.

