

# Friends of Burma, Inc. Newsletter

## Friends of Burma Annual Report 2021



January 15, 2022

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This has been a terrible year for Myanmar. The country has been plunged into a civil war, unseen since 1948, because of the takeover in February of the democratically elected government by the military. Therefore, when Friends of Burma would ordinarily be sending donations primarily for education, instead we have sent thousands of dollars for humanitarian efforts, both for medical and for shelter and food.

We have sent over \$50,000 to keep the two hospitals we support open when most of the other 34 hospitals in Yangon are closed. We have sent \$21,745 for medical supplies, including oxygen tanks and oxygen concentrators and food. We have sent \$33,825 to help IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons who have been forced to flee from the Burmese Army.)

We gave Friends of Myanmar Governing Board the usual \$20,000 which they used for relief. We gave Myanmar Baptist Convention another \$20,000 for scholarships for children of ministers and Christian workers. We helped the fifty three Bible schools with a grant of \$12,990 which was divided among them. Because of the virus, these schools have been closed and so have no income.

We put out an urgent appeal to the 380 donors that we have e-mails for and they responded giving us \$91,000. Without the help of our generous donors, we could not have responded so positively to the many needs. Thank all of you for your care and concern. Our financial agent and others are doing dangerous work because the soldiers are roaming the streets taking what they want, beating up anyone suspected of aiding the opposition, raping women and girls, and seizing food, medicine, oxygen tanks, and other needed supplies. Some times they burn the supplies. The volunteers, who do this, do it at great risk to themselves. Please remember these brave people in your prayers.

### Hospital Support



Here is why we support the two hospitals: “I am Naw Khu Wah Paw from Maw Bee Township. I got a motorcycle accident on 22nd February 2021 with my son and one person who hit us. I was injured, at my head and cervical. Then the villagers sent us to Yangon for the referral. But no hospital accepts us due to we three got severely injured. Then, the villagers referred us to the military hospital and, the hospital did not accept us. Lastly, one of the villagers made a phone call to KBC hospital. The hospital replied that they will see it first and decide it as we were severely injured. Then, we were brought, to the hospital. Firstly, the hospital arranged for my son (Saw Law Eh) and then the others. The two of us were tested for CT scans and accepted as inpatients. After accepting me as an inpatient, I have to do a cervical X-ray test too. Then the hospital found out that, I got a cervical fracture and has to do an operation. And according to the order of the specialist, I finished my operation and could sit now. For head injury, I took further treatment as ordered by the neuro specialist. After my recovery, I heard from the hospital management team arranged things for my treatment cost. I thank God for providing me my life again. And I thank FOB well-wishers for supporting me in my treatment. Without these well-wishers’ support, I will not get back my life too. With all of your supports, I could sit now. Please pray for me to get well and rehabilitate soon.”

**Humanitarian Relief.** Report from a distributor of Relief Supplies. (Edited.)



Christmas Celebration in my Church.



The Needy Families with Rice and Cooking Oil.

I led Christmas worship programs at two locations: an IDP camp and my church. I gave 23 bags of rice and 23 bottles of cooking oil to the more needy at IDP camp. I also distributed 20 bags of rice and 20 bottles of cooking oil to 20 needy families in my church. At the Christmas celebrations, I invited not only Christians but also non-Christians and had the opportunity to share the good news of Jesus Christ with them. I am very grateful for your donation which I used as Christmas gifts to the needy. (Name edited out.)  
(This report was compiled by Neil & Diana Sowards.)

**Another Report:**

Dear FOB donors,

Please let me take the time to express gratitude. I am extremely grateful to you for your kind heart especially for your loving care and deep concern upon the current needy (IDPs) at Kayah state. As this is the urgent need, I had run for it as soon as possible and just got home yesterday and have a chance to write to you now.

Thank you so much for the donation (Total - 300,000 MMK) in supporting the urgent need of warm clothes for those IDPs. May God be with you and bless you more.

In Solidarity! Name withheld, Freelance Consultant, Program Management & Humanitarian Aids, Toungoo

**Report from Wa Orphanage** that has 65 children. The Wa association of churches supported this orphanage. With many of its members out of work, they were not able to fill their pledges which left the orphanage unable to pay its workers. So they have been really struggling. FOB made a grant to them.



### **Alternative Christmas giving.**

Several years ago one of our donors got tired of giving gifts to people who did not need anything so he sent a number of \$50 gifts to Burma and our agent there gave them out to really poor and desperate people. We got some really heartwarming stories back. Others liked hearing about this program. Last year 25 such gifts were given. More good stories! This year 75 such gifts were given. Fifty dollars is more than three months income for many of the recipients. Isn't Christmas really about helping those who really need it?

**Christmas Gift Report. 2021.** One dollar is equal to 1,800 kyats. Names withheld to protect them.



Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards and FOB donors,

I am, Name Withheld, from MIT's music department. It was my honor to have this wonderful opportunity to share FOB's Christmas gift to a lady who is in need of financial assistance. The following is my feedback after giving the gift to her.

1. How did you choose the recipient?

There are a few families and individuals in the area where I live (Insein-Taungthugone) to whom I have been delivering food and other essential items in several months. Among them, I found that the recipient, Ms. Ah Nay Paw, is one of the least who's in need of financial help.

2. What was the financial situation of the recipient?

Ms. Ah Nay Paw is a Kayar widow, who's taking care of her 10 year old daughter, her elderly mother, and two other boys who left their homes for the wars in their village in Kayar State, and currently living with her. She is running a small tailoring shop to support her family. With the pandemic and the coup, her business is not doing so well. She is basically trying to make ends meet by the little money she can make from tailoring and some food rations shared by a church she's going to.

3. What was the reaction of the recipient?

She was so surprised to receive the gift as she didn't expect anyone would bring such gift to her. She said she was thankful to the Lord and to FOB for the gift.

#### 4. What was your experience?

When I heard that I was to give the gift to someone I know in need, I thought it could be difficult to make the choice to whom the gift should be given. But right at that moment, I saw this lady, and only this lady, in my mind. Then, I felt joy in my heart as I saw her receiving the gift with a thankful heart. I thank God for his guidance, and I am so glad that I could be a part of sending FOB's Christmas gift to the needy.

With appreciation, Name Withheld

#### **A report from Rev. T. (Name Withheld):**

Dear Dr. Neil and Diana Sowards and FOB Donors,

Saya C.M. (a missionary in Dala, Yangon) was given two Christmas gifts to give out. He had advised the father of the poor family to drive a tricycle to make some money for his family. So he borrowed a tricycle. He had to pay 1000 kyats per day to the owner. On average he could make about 3000-4000 kyats per day, but after paying 1000 kyats to the owner, he would have 2000-3000 for his family. Saya mentioned that if he owns his own tricycle, he will not need to pay for the rental and will be able to earn more for his family.

I asked Saya C.M. how much would be the current price of the tricycle that he had borrowed. He said it would cost between 150,000 and 180,000 (new ones will cost more than 400,000). Then, I strongly felt that we should give two Christmas gifts to Ko Nyi to buy a tricycle which will help his family tremendously and will be used for years. So I gave two Christmas gifts (2 x 90,000 = 180,000) to Saya C. M. to buy a tricycle for this family. Saya later told me that he and Ko Nyi bought a tricycle with 170,000 kyats and the rest (10,000) would be for their immediate use.

I translated Saya C.M.'s letter in Burmese as follows:

*"Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards and FOB donors,*

*Merry Christmas to you all.*

*I chose Ko Nyi's family for the Christmas gift. There are five members in his family including his mother. He worked any available jobs to earn a living for his family. His mother and wife collected bottles along Ayeyarwady River. Sometimes they picked betel nuts and sold them. Since he could not find any other job, Ko Nyi borrowed a tricycle to make money for the family. I chose the family for this reason.*



*Ko Nyi said that he was very happy and grateful for a Christmas gift of a tricycle for his family. He was very happy to receive it unexpectedly and how much he was grateful is beyond what he could express. He was grateful to you and the donors and prayed that God would bless you more.*

*My family and I live and work as a missionary in Dala. Here most of the people are not educated and they are very poor. Some people sold water to earn a living. But after the virus and the coup, many people who used to buy water from them could no longer buy it from them. So they are in a very difficult situation." -- **Saya C. M.***

I am also very happy that we made this decision to give two Christmas gifts to buy a tricycle for Ko Nyi's family. Your gifts made this Christmas more meaningful and special for this family.

Shalom,

**Rev. T. (Name Withheld)**

Myanmar Institute of Theology

If you want to read more reports on Christmas gifts, please follow [this link](#):

#### **WISH LIST.**

1. Money to keep Myanmar Institute of Theology afloat. \$21,000 needed. BIM (Baptist International Ministries) is contributing \$24,000.
2. Humanitarian support for rice, cooking oil, etc. \$5 feeds a family 4 days.

3. Aid to virus sufferers, oxygen tanks, oxygen accumulators, medicine, etc.
4. Monetary support for our two hospitals.
5. Desk top computer for Tachilek Bible School to replace one that died. \$1,000.



FOB enabled two organizations to get money to two blind schools.



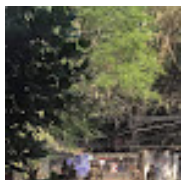
Annual Report

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*April 02, 2021*



"A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed." Proverbs 11:25 We can't thank you enough for all you have supported in this time of need in Myanmar. Because of your ki

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*May 23, 2016*

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