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Peacebuilding, Education, and Advocacy Programme in Myanmar

■ ■ **Developmental Evaluation** ■

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DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION FOR THE PEACEBUILDING, EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY PROGRAMME IN MYANMAR

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PREFACE

At a time when conflict is affecting so many children around the globe, peacebuilding becomes a prerequisite for achieving human security and lasting development results. Recognizing this challenge, UNICEF has over the past several years developed and supported a programme to test and implement innovative education solutions to achieve peacebuilding results. This programme was the Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme (PBEA), implemented from 2012 to 2016 and supported by funding from the Government of the Netherlands.

The programme set out an ambitious vision of strengthening resilience, social cohesion and human security in 14 participating countries. Given such a novel strategy and challenging agenda, it was agreed by programme managers and stakeholders that evaluation activities should be undertaken to document programme processes, choices and decisions, and to provide valuable lessons for programming in complex settings. Hence, PBEA has benefited from three distinct evaluation activities: an evaluability assessment, conducted in 2013; a summative evaluation, completed in 2015 to document and assess outcomes; and, in 2016, developmental evaluation activities were concluded in Ethiopia and Myanmar. The Ethiopia developmental evaluation is the subject of this report.

“Developmental evaluation” is an approach that draws on evaluative methods and thinking and supports adaptive learning within complex initiatives. It combines, in real time, the rigour of monitoring and evaluation practice with the flexibility and creativity that is required in seeking solutions to complex development problems typically involving innovation, high levels of uncertainty, and social engagement. Administered in collaboration with the UNICEF Education Section and UNICEF Southeast Field Office in Mawlamyine, Mon state, the Myanmar developmental evaluation was designed using

outcome harvesting methodology. It consolidated research and insights gathered from program beneficiaries, implementing partners, and agencies and stakeholders external to the PBEA program. A word of thanks is extended to both program beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries who continue to help UNICEF and its partners define and carry out humanitarian and development activities aimed at strengthening social cohesion and resilience in their communities.

The developmental evaluation was led by Mathias Kjaer, a consultant who was embedded with the Myanmar team, and managed by the Evaluation Office. Mathias showed considerable conceptual and practical skills in conducting the work, and we would like to recognize and applaud his expertise, energy, and dedication. We would also like to acknowledge the contribution and guidance of the UNICEF LESC team: Cliff Meyers and Malar San; UNICEF Southeast Field Office including Anne-Cecile Vialle, Thet Naing, KhinThiThi, Mi Lay New, and especially Htin Linn who served as a second interviewer and translator during fieldwork in Mon, and Professor Joseph LoBianco and the University of Melbourne. From UNICEF headquarters in New York, we acknowledge the contribution of Bosun Jang from the PBEA Team, and Kathleen Letshabo, the evaluation manager.

Finally, we wish to express special appreciation to the Government of the Netherlands, whose vision and commitment to building peaceful societies has not only helped support changes in the field of education and peacebuilding but has also, through this programme and others, helped to improve the lives of millions of children in so many parts of the world affected by conflict.

Colin Kirk
Director
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MAP OF ACTIVITY SITES



Source: Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU)

of choice for the Myanmar fieldwork followed the Outcome Harvesting approach as the main data collection strategy, supplemented by monthly DE reports capturing evidence and learning from the overall program.² The idea was to capture both the broader organizational learning as UNICEF country offices adapted their programming to implement a pilot peace-building program while also drilling down and exploring specific outcomes produced by PBEA.

This Outcome Harvest focuses primarily on the latter—exploring specific outcomes produced by PBEA Myanmar—but draws in evidence for the larger DE where relevant. LESC was selected for exploration given that it was one of the most significant PBEA activities supported by UNICEF Myanmar, both in terms of budget as well as public visibility. LESC addressed one of the key conflict drivers identified in PBEA’s conflict analysis, and was one of few activities to have been developed and implemented solely with PBEA support and not adapted from existing activities. The project was also one of the longest running activities supported under PBEA and therefore one of the most likely activities from which outcome level results could be identified.

Additional information on the design and evolution of the PBEA developmental evaluation is provided in **Section 2: Introduction and Background** while **Section 7: Lessons Learned** compares some of the lessons drawn from LESC and the larger DE data collection, as well as some lessons learned over the course of executing the DE to help inform the design and implementation of future UNICEF DEs.

Purpose and Objectives

The Outcome Harvest is intended to strengthen the evidence base around PBEA Myanmar’s higher level results. Findings will be used by

the project team to strengthen implementation in Kayin, Kachin, and future LESC states and regions. It will also be used by the UNICEF Myanmar and PBEA PMT to document contributions that PBEA has made to building social cohesion in Myanmar.

The Outcome Harvest provides an objective assessment of outcome level changes in the behavior and relationship between Ministry of Education (MoE) and Mon National Education Committee (MNEC) stakeholders resulting from their participation in LESC. It is designed to identify and assess key results, their significance, UNICEF Myanmar’s contribution, and any unanticipated consequences.

Scope

The Outcome Harvest investigates LESC activities in Mon between February 2014 and June 2016. While focused on behavior and/or relationship changes specific to Mon, it draws on evidence from the regional LESC initiative and activities in Kayin and Kachin. Data collection took place between March and June 2016. It involved 60 interviews with 185 stakeholders (65 male, 120 female) across seven townships in Mon (Bilin, Kyaikmaraw, Mawlamyine, Mudon, Thanbyuzayat, Thaton, Ye) and Yangon, as well as Skype-based interviews with stakeholders in Chang Mai, London, and Sydney.

Limitations

The research design and lack of baseline M&E data do not allow for the assessment of attribution, however the Outcome Harvest will aim to demonstrate *inferred causality* and the contribution of UNICEF Myanmar to these results. Likewise, the Outcome Harvest aims to provide analytical, not statistical generalizability of the results in Mon to other LESC project areas.

² DE monthly reports are available from UNICEF Evaluation Office upon request.

spoke to most or all of the activities involved in UNICEF’s Whole State Approach. However, as with Outcome 1, awareness of LESC was extremely limited at the community level.

The significance of Mon’s two largest education providers collaborating on other important education issues outside of language policy is substantial. Across all interviews conducted, interviewees stated that improved interaction between MoE and MNEC was positive. However, respondents, particularly from MNEC and outside experts/researcher groups also cautioned that this improved interaction was positive as long as it was not for ulterior motives—i.e. the expansion and takeover of MNEC schools by MoE. There is a legacy of mistrust in Mon and although the increased interaction is a positive development, it is one step on a longer road of continuous trust building.

In terms of UNICEF’s contribution, a key challenge throughout this Outcome Harvest was

separating the effects of LESC or broader UNICEF PBEA-supported activities with the results brought by civil society and other development partners’ activities, major education reforms, and changes in overall structural environment, including the two ceasefires between government and New Mon State Party. However, trying to disaggregate the influence of individual activities may be inappropriate given the logic behind UNICEF’s Whole State Approach. The approach emphasizes the synergies and multiplier effects that a combination of activities can have compared to any individual activity alone. While there was a consensus among stakeholders that LESC helped strengthen relationships between MoE and MNEC, LESC was part of a larger set of activities supported both by UNICEF under its Whole State Approach and other important activities supported by other non-UNICEF implementers and partners. ■

3



LESC, as part of a broader set of activities under the UNICEF Whole State Approach, helped strengthen horizontal social cohesion in Mon.

A majority of survey respondents (74%) felt that UNICEF education activities had helped build social cohesion in Mon. School grants, infrastructure, and school supplies topped the list in terms of frequency mentioned among all activities supplied by UNICEF, government, or other development partners in Mon. Interestingly, language policy was the second least commonly cited activity. However, when asked to rank activities in terms of their importance for promoting social cohesion, UNICEF’s Whole State Approach ranked as most the important, followed by infrastructure, Education Sector Coordination meeting, and then LESC activities. Paradoxically, school supplies, the most frequently cited example and school grants, the third most frequently cited example, ranked among the lowest.

Improved cohesion between the two largest education actors in Mon state is significant and likely to facilitate the gradual convergence of the two school systems. However, while there is evidence of improved horizontal cohesion between the education providers in Mon, the Outcome Harvest did not find compelling evidence that this has yet translated into improved vertical cohesion between government and community members. Evidence from interviews and the actions of MoE and MNEC, as well as corroborated by outside researchers and secondary sources suggest that the horizontal cohesion has improved in the last 3-5 years. There is also strong evidence that UNICEF’s Whole State Approach has played a role in strengthening this cohesion. The evidence is less clear on LESC’s specific contribution, with a higher contribution noted at state level than at township or community levels. ■

Lessons Learned Drawn for Larger DE

Six lessons learned emerged from the LESC Outcome Harvest that reflecting lessons captured in the monthly DE reports. These include the need for:

1

Stronger and more explicit design, monitoring, evaluation, and communication strategies.

This need has been expressed in DE monthly reports as well as in a number of external evaluations and reviews of other UNICEF Education activities. The lack of clear and coherent design documents—e.g. concept note or Theory of Change—has hindered the Education team’s

ability to communicate its intended results while the lack of systematic monitoring and evaluation has prevented its ability to capture and demonstrate actual results to external audiences. ■

2

Increased engagement of parents and community members in education activities.

While UNICEF has demonstrated successes implementing top-down approaches, more can be done to support bottom-up demand from the grassroots levels. Internal field office reports make consistent reference to the need to

facilitate greater parental and community awareness and support for non-formal and early childhood development activities however no activity has yet been designed to target this need. ■

3


Avoiding expanding or scaling up activities in conflict areas without explicit assessment and monitoring of how those activities affect conflict dynamics.

While LESC activities in Mon have shown early successes, Kayin and Kachin have unique characteristics that make them more challenging, including non-state school systems unaligned with the government curriculum and active

areas of conflict. UNICEF needs to carefully assess and consider these dynamics in order to be conflict sensitive and avoid “doing harm” before expanding activities into these areas. ■

Recommendations

1



Aiming to replicate and extend successes strengthening relationships at the state level, LESC should explore ways to strengthen relationships between MoE and MNEC at township, community, and schools levels.


To facilitate a cascade effect from improved state level relationship down to township and school levels, UNICEF could employ a variety of strategies, including:

- (1) arranging dissemination events at TEOs throughout LESC states;
- (2) advocating SEDs to regularly emphasize their support for the use of MTB-MLE;

- (3) preparing local language materials for schools and general public to promote reading on local languages and
- (4) launching media campaigns through local newspapers, radio, or Facebook.

This can be implemented in the short-to-medium term (1-3 years). ■

2




LESC implementers and UNICEF Education team should look to capitalize on synergies across their Whole State Approach activities.

UNICEF can do more to take advantage of the synergies found between activities in its Whole State Approach. For example, SITE and TEIP trainings and workshops present a tremendous opportunity to disseminate awareness on progress made under LESC. These activities are already bringing together MNEC and MoE

teachers, Head Teachers, TEOs, and township administrators. They represent a “low hanging fruit” that UNICEF could easily capitalize on especially in their Whole State Approach states over the next two years.

This can be implemented in the short term (3-12 months). ■

3



LESC implementers should explore and strengthen collaboration with education partners already working in LESC project areas.

LESC implementers should more actively engage education partners already working with ethnic education providers. This could be achieved by: (1) inviting potential partners to dissemination events; (2) producing communication materials outlining the main aims, logic,

and timeline of LESC; and (3) issuing a solicitation for national and international partners to implement LESC activities in states and regions not currently engaged by UNICEF.

This can be implemented in the short term (3-12 months). ■

1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND



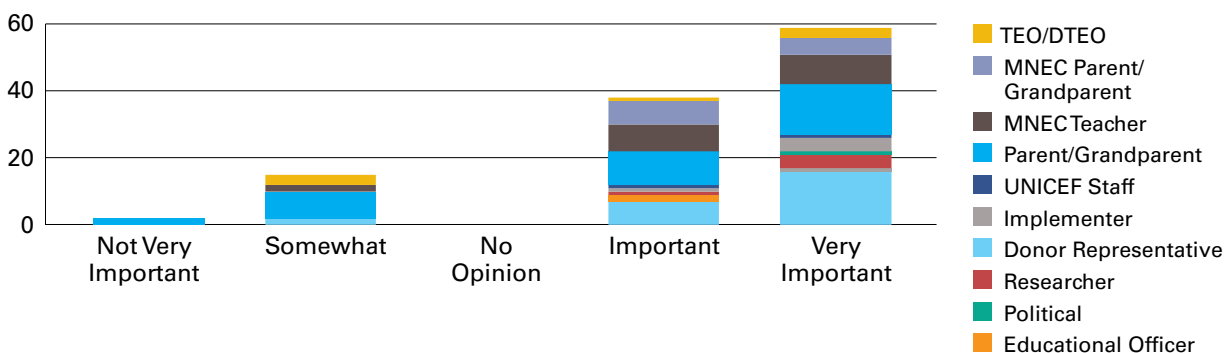
and weak administrative and information management capacity.”¹² This finding is corroborated by the work of Ashley South and Marie Lall, two leading scholars studying the issues of language, education, and conflict in Myanmar. In their latest study (February 2016), South and Lall argue that “since the late 1940s, the right to MTB language education has been one of the issues at the heart of Myanmar’s prolonged state-society and armed ethnic conflicts...For decades, the state has emphasized a centralized, Myanmar language only education system that many ethnic groups felt provided no place for their own languages to be practiced which by extension, threatened their cultures and ethnic identities.”¹³

As explained by Professor Joseph LoBianco, the main designer of the LESC project under review, “Language is a factor in conflict in several ways—some overt and evident, while others camouflaged. Language is both an expression of identity, as well as a tool to access cultural, symbolic, political, and material resources...As

language and language-related decisions can be used to include or exclude people, they are key determinants in marginalization, but, also in social cohesion and breaking down societal barriers.”¹⁴ Professor LoBianco goes on to explain that within schools, “The exclusion of learners’ native tongues can also lead to feelings that their cultures, histories and customs are not valued in education environments. This creates a divide between minority and majority languages and the respective cultures that these languages both reflect and shape.”¹⁵

The importance of language was confirmed during data collection for this research. **Charts 1** below and **2** on the next page show a strong consensus around the centrality of language to the expression of identity in Mon state. Interestingly, while almost of ethnic Mons interviewed felt that one cannot be Mon without speaking the Mon language, ethnic Kayin and Pa-Oh stated that one could still be considered Kayin or Pa-Oh as long as one “loved the people” and worked in their interest.

CHART 1 How important is language for the preservation of identity? (n=114)



¹² UNICEF Myanmar. “Conflict Analysis Summary: Myanmar.” Pg. 6. <http://learningforpeace.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Conflict-Analysis-Summary-Myanmar-Final1.pdf>.

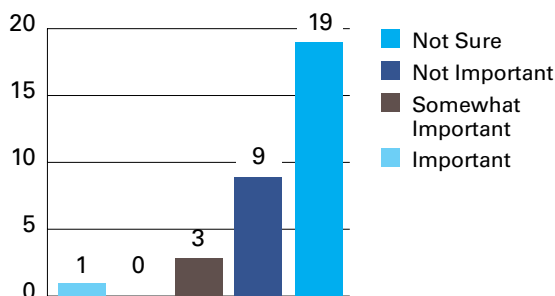
¹³ South, Ashley and Marie Lall. “Schooling and Conflict: Ethnic Education and Mother Tongue-based Teaching in Myanmar.” The ASIA Foundation and United States Agency for International Development. February 2016.

¹⁴ UNICEF EAPRO, 2016, p. 38

¹⁵ Ibid. Pg. 23.

CHART 2

Importance of Language to Identity (n=32)



AIM OF MON LESC PROJECT:

“The underlying aims of the LESC Initiative in Mon State were to build an understanding of language and its role as a gatekeeper of greater social, educational and economic benefits. This included developing an understanding and consensus around the importance of mother tongue education. It also aimed to bridge the gap between the practices and desires of Mon speakers and educators, and reconcile the use of Mon with the national language as the medium of instruction.”

UNICEF/EAPRO, “Myanmar Country Report,” pg. 47.

Fortunately, while language remains a salient driver of conflict in Myanmar there is hope for the future. “The country’s democratic transition of the past few years, however, has enabled issues of MTB to be discussed more openly, and growing acceptance of decentralization within the government at all levels and among the

wider public is providing an opening for consideration of how MTB education can be productively integrated into the education system.”¹⁶

LESC Project in Mon State

Origins

The UNICEF Myanmar LESC project in Mon emerged from a larger three country initiative—Malaysia, Thailand, and Myanmar—implemented by Professor LoBianco and the University of Melbourne and supported by UNICEF EAPRO with PBEA funds.¹⁷ According to LESC documents and interviews with the implementing team, a proposal to extend and deepen the initial activity to a country-level project focused on Myanmar was accepted in early 2015.¹⁸ The new project (hereafter simply “LESC”) sought to build on momentum gained during the regional initiative to prepare a “peacebuilding and social cohesion promoting national language policy,” as well as state-level language policies in Mon, Kayin, and Kachin. Ultimately, LESC wanted to “build an understanding of language and its role as a gatekeeper of greater social, educational and economic benefits. This included developing an understanding and consensus around the importance of mother tongue education. It also aimed to bridge the gap between the practices and desires of Mon speakers and educators, and reconcile the use of Mon with the national language as the medium of instruction.”¹⁹

These policies would be developed through a methodology developed by Professor LoBianco involving a “participatory process of facilitated dialogues, consultations, and site visits involving a range of key language and education stakeholders.”²⁰ The project proposal emphasized that multiple language skills would be needed

¹⁶ South and Lall, 2016.

¹⁷ For a more detailed account of the conceptualization, design, and development of the EAPRO regional LESC initiative, see http://www.unicef.org/eapro/Synthesis_Report_Language_Education_andSocial_Cohesion_Initiative.pdf.

¹⁸ UNICEF EAPRO, 2016, pg. 24.

¹⁹ “Mon State Language Policy Document.” Internal UNICEF Myanmar Document. January 2016.

²⁰ University of Melbourne, “LESC Project Proposal.” 2014

by students as Myanmar continues to open up to the international community and was thus designed to “reflect learning in and of ethnic languages, the Union language and English language as a key international language.”²¹ Recognizing UNICEF’s commitment to inclusive education, LESC also aimed to ensure that policies would “include provisions for children with Special Education Needs (SEN), in particular for deaf children to learn sign language.” A review of project documents did not find any explicit mention to the issue of gender sensitivity.

LESC Project in Mon

Mon was purposefully selected as the pilot site for LESC based on a number of facilitating factors. The idea was to pilot LESC in a conducive environment to first test and strengthen the model and then replicate successful practices in more challenging and politically sensitive areas such as Kayin and Kachin. According to project documents and interviews with the LESC team these advantages included:

- **Geography.** Mon state is relatively compact and easily accessible in terms of access from Yangon and travel throughout the state.
- **Limited number of minority languages.** Unlike neighboring Kayin, there is only one recognized Mon language,²² which has benefitted from a rich and long history. “The Mon Sangha has been involved in education and preserving local language and culture for centuries. Since the pre-colonial period, the Mon Buddhist monkhood was responsible for recording and reproducing elements of Mon national and religious history, and transmitting the Mon language in a context where

many observers expected this to die out.”²³ Mon is also home to a considerable population of Kayin, Pa-oh, and Myanmar speakers, yet is considerably less diverse than other ethnic minority areas around Myanmar.

- **Relative stability.** Mon state has had a relatively stable ceasefire between the NMSP and the government since 1995. While tensions have flared, renewed ceasefire in 2011 helped to deescalate tensions despite the fact that NMSP refused to sign the “National Ceasefire Agreement” in 2015. Nevertheless, Mon has witnessed increased investment and is now one of the best performing states in terms of education and socio-economic indicators.
- **Legislative environment.** Mon has the advantage of having a fairly progressive state parliament. Beginning in 2011, state ethnic educators and lawmakers began discussing the inclusion of local languages in government schools. These discussions were documented in parliamentary minutes which have since been mistakenly identified by many observers as a law allowing for the teaching of ethnic languages in government schools but only outside of regular school hours and without the support of state funding.²⁴ In 2014, a new Mon Language Curriculum was introduced which included Mon language instruction (up to one hour per day), making Mon state “the first to teach an ethnic minority language in a government school in more than 50 years.”²⁵ In January 2016, the Mon Language Curriculum Committee announced that 400 Mon language teachers would receive free training and subsequent 30,000 kyats monthly salary provided by the state government.²⁶

²¹ UNICEF Myanmar. “Outcome Case Study: Development of an Inclusive Language in Education Policy in Mon State, Myanmar.” 2014 PBEA Annual Report. February 2015.

²² Although LoBianco does note four sociolinguistic variations for Mon: Central, Bago and Ye forms of Mon, as well as Thai Mon. For more detail, see “Mon State Language Policy Document” (draft). January 2016.

²³ South, 2003

²⁴ “New Mon Language Curriculum Ready for Government Schools.” The Irrawaddy. January 25, 2016. <http://www.irrawaddy.com/burma/new-mon-language-curriculum-ready-for-government-schools.html>.

²⁵ “Make Multilingual Education a Priority: Policymakers.” The Irrawaddy. Friday, March 27, 2015.

²⁶ Ibid.

provides people with the information and skills they need to actively and meaningfully participate in these communications.

Central to the assumption emphasizing the importance of process above, a key feature of LESC is the use of facilitated dialogues. “The aim of ‘facilitated dialogues’ is to support groups debating, or contesting social issues to canvas policy alternatives, especially when these are the cause of conflict, tension, or policy paralysis...[Their] aim is to develop a consensus on the content and aims of language policy for a large number of ethnic/indigenous settings.”²⁹ They are based on the notion of “deliberative democracy” where groups are provided space for open and frank dialogue, and counseled on how to replace subjective, emotional statements with objective, evidence-based examples. The facilitated dialogues usually take places over three days where the first day focuses on problem naming, the second day on goal setting, and the third day of planning. As explained by Professor LoBianco, a central feature is the use a “COE [Community, Officials, and Experts] methodology” to create a “culture of dialogue.” Professor LoBianco stresses the importance of incorporating these three viewpoints as community members generally speak from a more experiential background using practical, real-world examples; officials bring experience on the realities of policymaking; and experts bring a more nuanced, academic perspective on technical issues such as language status planning and examples from other similar historic or international experiences.

While project documents explain many of the underlying assumptions and implicit logic behind LESC, the causal linkages between the assumed results were not articulated in a formal **Theory of Change** (TOC) in original design

documents. However, as part of the PBEA Developmental Evaluation (DE), an overarching TOC was developed in late 2014 and presented in both a 2014 PBEA Outcome Case Study and the 2016 Mandalay Language Conference (see **Figure 1** on next page).

UNICEF Myanmar Developmental Evaluation

Given the novelty, size, and complexity of the PBEA program, UNICEF’s Evaluation Office commissioned an evaluability assessment in 2013.³⁰ The assessment made a number of recommendations to improve the “evaluation readiness” of the program, including a recommendation for UNICEF to balance the need for accountability to funding authorities with the opportunity to capture emergent learning over the course of implementation. In response, the Evaluation Office adopted a dual-pronged approach comprised of a (1) more traditional, accountability-focused outcome evaluation and (2) more novel, learning-focused DE.

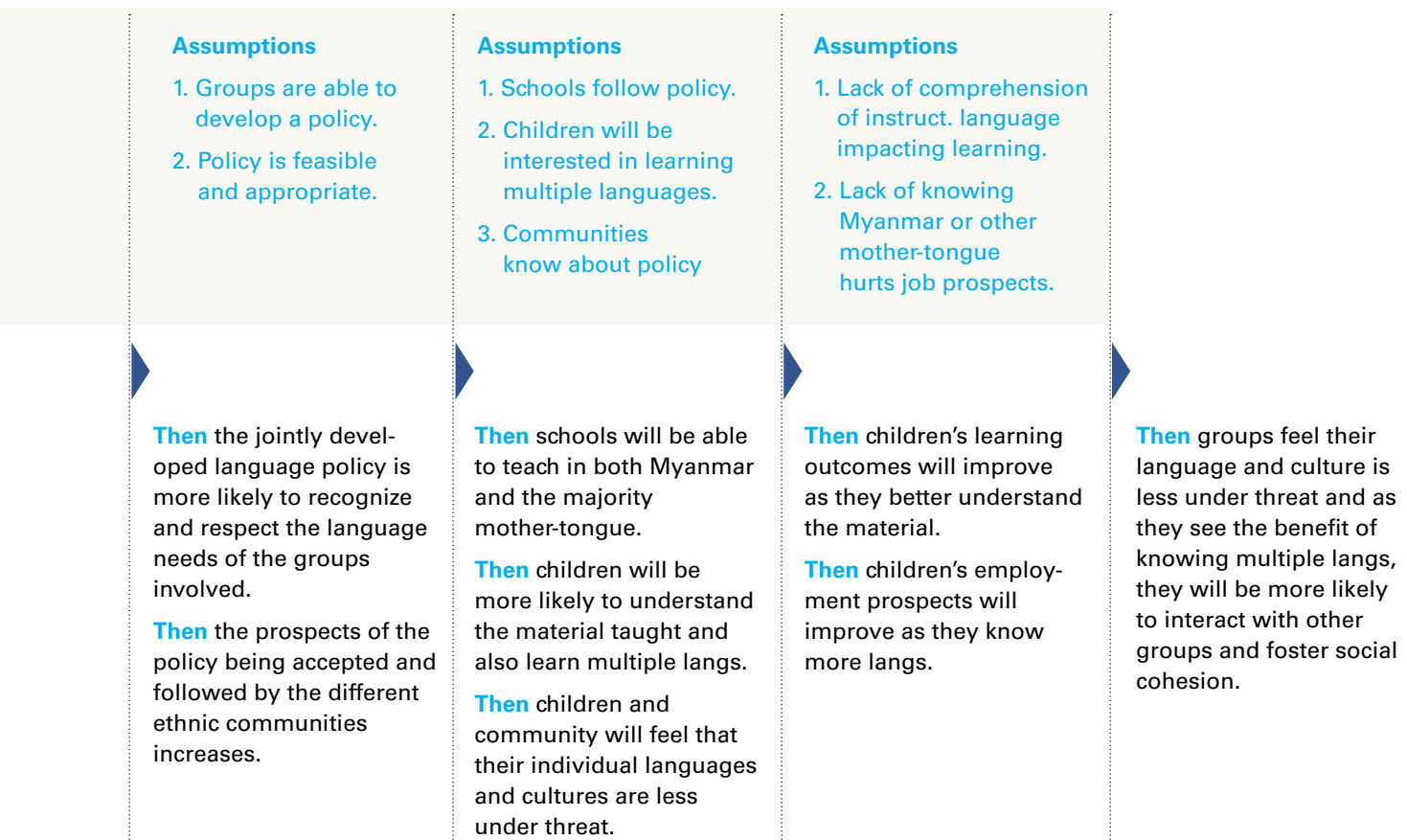
The original Terms of Reference (TOR) called for a three person team led by a US-based Lead Evaluator and supported by two in-country Support Evaluators to “systematically capture the learning that can be infused into the programme to heighten its chances for success.”³¹ The TOR specified that the DE should follow “an adaptive, context-specific approach” based on a “learning framework which will develop sub-questions that are customized to the programming context” and focused on “two to three key outcomes that will be selected by the country programme team for intensive monitoring and study.”³² The original design envisioned data collected across three sites—Myanmar, Chad, and NYHQ—to inform an

²⁹ Ibid. Pg. 2 and 22.

³⁰ http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index_PBEA.html.

³¹ “Terms of Reference for Support Evaluator for the PBEA Developmental Evaluation.” UNICEF Evaluation Office. July 2014. Pg. 2.

³² Ibid.



of the PBEA outcome evaluation, the learning framework was altered to be less outcome focused and more process focused exploring how UNICEF country offices adapted regular programming to implement PBEA. Four new learning objectives were developed exploring: (1) which internal processes were used to support and develop peacebuilding capacities; (2) how PBEA prompted adaptations of existing or “business as usual” approaches; (3) how external systems influenced PBEA implementation; and (4) documenting the unique characteristics of PBEA Myanmar. The design was amended a final time in November 2015 when the Lead Evaluator recommended following an Outcome Harvest approach focusing on a

“contained area” of PBEA implementation and identifying tangible outcome levels results and analyzing PBEA’s contribution to those changes.

This report aims to reconcile the two DE learning frameworks by first identifying how language and education affects social cohesion and then exploring how internal processes, adaptations from “business as usual approaches,” external systems, and the unique characteristics of PBEA Myanmar influenced results (second learning framework). See the “**Lessons Learned**” section for findings related to the DE learning frameworks and **Annex A: Terms of Reference** for additional information of the DE.

2 COUNTRY AND STATE CONTEXT



with an estimated 54% completing primary school in 2011, placing Myanmar in the lowest quintile among the ASEAN countries.⁴¹ Only 28% of children from the poorest households attended secondary school, while 86% of children from the richest quintile attended.⁴² 89% of all children (5-19) are literate, the third lowest percentage in the ASEAN region.⁴³ Education providers in Myanmar include the Government of Myanmar (the largest provider), the Monastic School System, the Ethnic Education Departments, and other non-state providers. Township Education Offices (TEOs) located in the 330 townships are responsible for the delivery of basic education. Traditionally the overall governance of basic education has been highly centralized in the MoE, mainly in the Department of Basic Education.

Mon State

Located in southeast Myanmar, Mon is home to an estimated 2,054,393 people (52% female) of whom 754,026 are below the age of 18.⁴⁴ Administratively, Mon is divided into two districts, 10 townships, and two sub-townships. According to MoE, Mon had 1,482 schools, 15,288 teachers, and 377,089 students during the 2014-15 school year. Mon generally ranks above the Union average in terms of socio-economic indicators—21 vs. 38 for headcount poverty; 36% vs. 32% of households with electricity—but ranks near the average in school attendance (64% vs. 64%) and literacy (87% vs. 90%). Ethnologue estimates there were around 743,000 Mon speakers in Myanmar in 2004 (the latest year available).⁴⁵ Myanmar is the most

commonly spoken language, followed by Mon, Kayin, and Pa-Oh.

Education Providers

There are two main education providers outside of the monastic or private school system: MoE and the MNEC.⁴⁶ “The relationships between state and non-state education regimes vary between township, districts, and villages. In most cases, cooperation between the Mon and the state education authorities is based on personal relationships in the local setting.” MNEC was created by the NMSP, an ethnic armed group yet to sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) but previously signed two bilateral ceasefires in 1995 and 2011. According to its own latest Education Management Information System data, MNEC has 800 teachers teaching 26,364 students (52% female) in 136 Mon National Schools (MNS) and 95 MoE administrated “mixed schools.” During the 2014-15 school year, 50% of all MNS student completed their primary-level education.⁴⁷

While there are a number of ethnic education providers in Myanmar, MNEC is unique in that it has developed its own ethnic language textbooks for social studies/history and Mon Language but also following the government curriculum for Math and Myanmar language. “MNS also helps solve the language bottleneck faced by native Mon speaking children, especially in the southern parts of Mon State which is populated by Mon households whose children are not be expected to be sufficiently bilingual to be schooled in a state school with Myanmar as the official language of instruction.

⁴¹ FHI360. “2014 National Education Profile”

⁴² 2012 UNICEF Determinant Analysis.

⁴³ A. Bonnerjee’s presentation on 2014 Census results (internal). UNICEF Myanmar. 2016.

⁴⁴ Republic of the Union of Myanmar. “2014 Myanmar Population and Housing Census: Mon State.” May 2015.

⁴⁵ UNICEF Myanmar. “Mon State Language Policy Document” (Internal version). January 2016.

⁴⁶ KNU-KED also has schools in Mon and is a significant education provider in Southeast Myanmar. However, as the focus of this Outcome Harvest is on changes in the behavior and relationship between MoE and MNEC the report does not cover KNU-KED schools.

⁴⁷ According to presentation made at “MNEC Donor Meeting” in March 2016 in Mawlamyine.

3 OVERVIEW AND METHODOLOGY



4 HARVESTED OUTCOMES



OUTCOME #1: Trust and Relationship Building for LESC between MoE and MNEC at State Level.

Result statement: Repeated interaction and joint discussion between diverse partners during LESC meetings and workshops helped foster trust and strengthen relationships for language policy development between state level MoE and MNEC stakeholders.

Who and what changed: MoE and MNEC State Level Officials. Findings from both the online survey and qualitative interviews show a strong perception on the part of LESC participants and outside observers that LESC helped strengthen relationships between those directly involved. As depicted in the **Chart 3**, 83% of respondents (38 of 46) indicated

that they had seen an improved relationship between MoE and MNEC. This included respondents from each stakeholder group with one notable exception: parents and grandparents. 3 of 5 from this group answered “no” with the other two being a teacher and a non-UNICEF implementer working on education in Mon. The one respondent that answered “unsure” clarified that “I have seen evidence of increased formalized interaction between MoE and MNEC but that doesn’t necessarily mean an improved relationship.”

Exploring this issue further, the survey asked respondents whether they thought that LESC specifically helped improve this relationship (see **Chart 4**). 74% respondents (17 of 23) answered “yes” while 17% (4 of 23) were “unsure” and 4% (1 of 23) answered “no.”

CHART 3 Have you seen any evidence of an improved relationship between MoE and MNEC in Mon? (n=46)

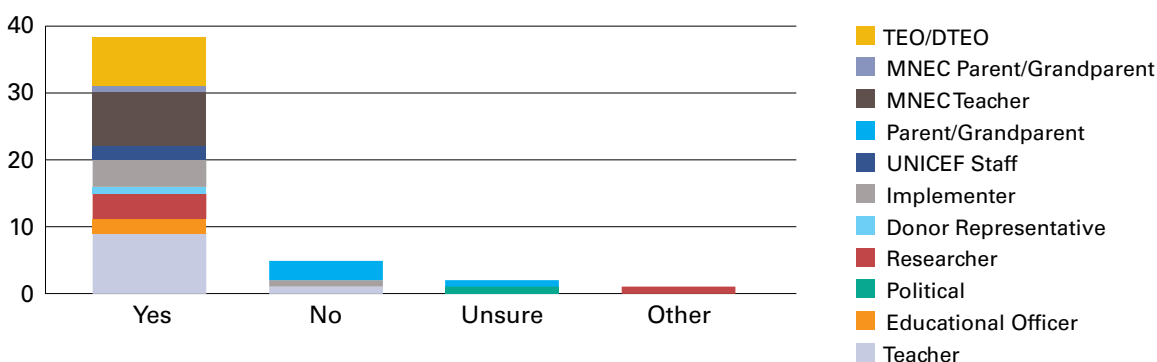
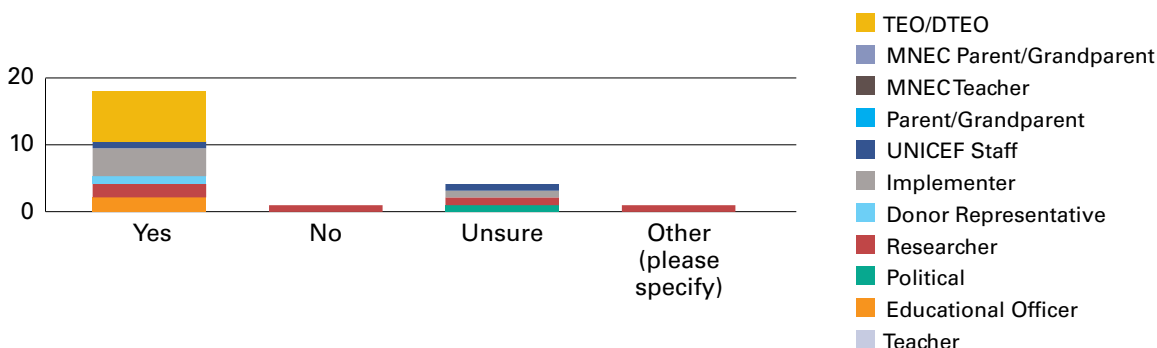


CHART 4 Do you think that this work [LESC] has improved relationships between MoE and MNEC? (n=23)



Survey respondents were less sure that LESC had helped strengthen relationships across ethnic groups. As shown in **Chart 5**, 61% (14 of 23) felt it had while 39% (9 of 23) were unsure.

These findings were then triangulated with findings from field interviews and desk review. Respondents from 40 of 60 interviews (67%) felt that some change(s) in the relationship between MoE and MNEC had taken place (see **Chart 11** under Outcome #2). The majority cited increased consultation and interaction, both through formal state and township level meetings and more informal check-ins, and teacher trainings. Respondents from 25 of these 40 interviews (63%) felt that UNICEF had contributed to these changes, while 2 (5%) answered “no” and 3 (8%) answered “partly” (see **Chart 6** next page). However, respondents generally referred to a number of UNICEF activities—e.g. through its Whole State Approach—and not necessarily LESC in isolation. From the desk review, LESC documents also indicate that an improvement in the relationship between participants took place. “The constructive and positive relationship that has formed between all stakeholders through the Facilitated Dialogue processes and associated meetings has not only created a sense of ownership and agency around language and education, but resulted in the transfer of collaboration more broadly.”⁵³

QUOTES FROM THE FIELD

“LESC workshops created spaces for ethnic groups and state education actors to talk and be friendly towards each other.”

~CSO representative, Mawlamyine

“LESC was different because of two issues: (1) Joe himself—he’s the ‘film star’ of multilingual education. People appreciated the high-level facilitation and bringing groups like MINE to the discussion; (2) at state-level in Mon I think there is a strong sense of ownership [over the policy].”

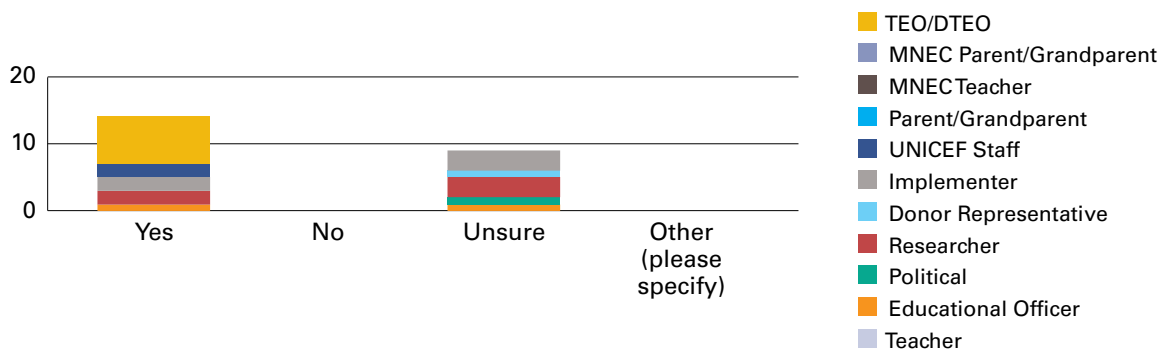
~Education Implementer not directly involved in LESC, Yangon

“They [MoE, academics, and ethnic language groups] got a chance to listen to other groups that normally they would never meet and this kind of events brings them together and provides an opportunity to listen to other perspectives. This a start that open future opportunities.”

~ LESC Implementer, Mawlamyine

CHART 5

Do you think that this work has improved relationships between different ethnic groups that participated? (n=23)



⁵³ LESC Country Report, pg. 23.

These documents go on to state, “Initially there was a high level of doubt and uncertainty towards the aims of the facilitated dialogue. However, after the first facilitated dialogue and a subsequent series of meetings, consensus began to form among many participants including parliamentarians, ethnic leaders and non-stakeholders. The policy dialogue process created a sense of trust across the different stakeholder groups and a belief in the role of language in peace building endeavors.”⁵⁴

However, while field interviews and observations showed that relationships had changed at state level, they also showed that these changes have yet to trickle down to community or school levels. No respondent (0%) across all ten focus groups with parents answered that they were familiar with either UNICEF’s LESC project or the Mon State language “bill” allowing the teaching of ethnic languages in government school.⁵⁵ Likewise, no respondents (0%) from teacher focus groups (both MoE and MNEC) were aware of LESC and only one group (10%) reported being aware of the Mon state language “bill” (see **Charts 7** below and **8** next page). That said, all five (100%) TEOs interviewed reported being familiar with both LESC and the Mon state language “bill.” It should be noted, however, that LESC did not explicitly target improving relationships below the state level and that raising community and school awareness takes time. Given that the LESC Mon State Language Policy Statement was only submitted to state parliament in March 2016, and is yet to be officially adopted, it is perhaps not surprising that awareness of this initiative is yet to trickle down to the community and school level.

CHART 6 Did UNICEF Contribute to Changes (n=28)

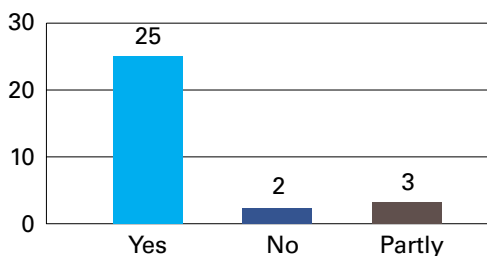
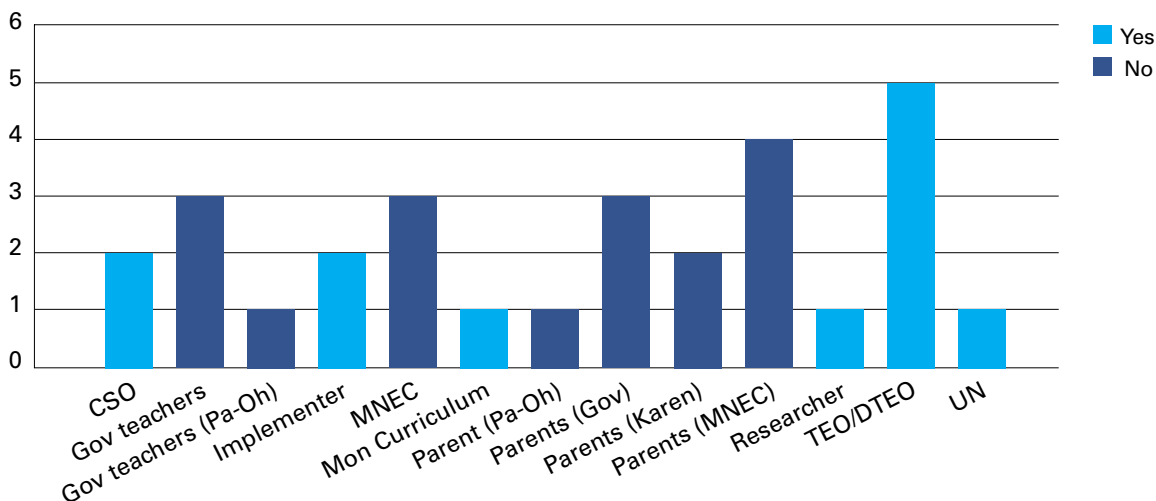


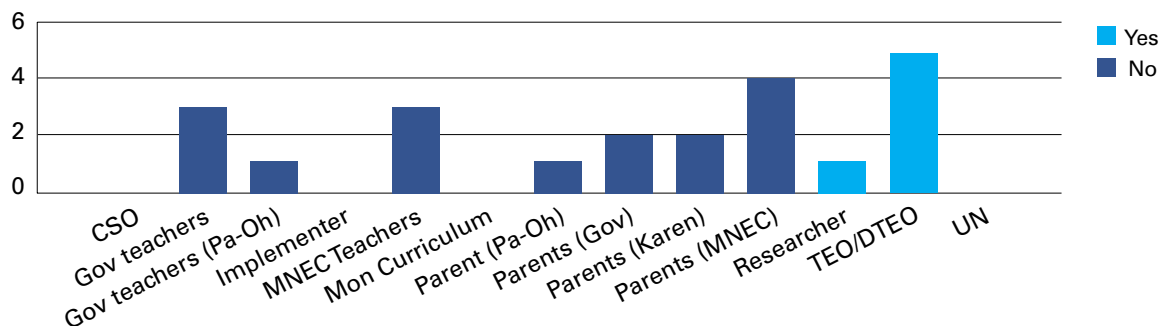
CHART 7 Familiar with LESC



⁵⁴ Ibid. Pg. 30.

⁵⁵ Interviews with LESC implementing staff revealed that the bill was never formally proposed or adopted but that media reported meeting minutes where the issue of teaching ethnic language in government schools was approved in principle as if it were actual law. Interestingly, the majority of TEOs themselves thought that this was an actual state law given directives received from state level MoE colleagues.

CHART 8 Familiar with State Language Policy



When: February 2014–March 2016. Trust and relationship building is generally a gradual and non-linear process, however field interviews, survey responses, and secondary sources indicate that trusts and relationships were strengthened throughout the project with more noticeable results coming towards the end (see **Charts 13 and 14** under Outcome 2).

Significance: High. This outcome represents a significant milestone on the path to increased cooperation between MoE and MNEC. Interviews and LESC project documents clearly acknowledge that LESC did not initiate the relationships between these two actors, which began in 1995 with MNEC students being allowed to sit the government matriculation exam. However, the fact that these groups were provided with a venue and opportunity to jointly present and discuss key issues related to language policy is a significant achievement. While the draft Policy Statement (see **Annex G**) is a notable output of LESC, the improved trust and relationship between the two actors is a more significant outcome. The importance, and further evidence, of this outcome is captured by Outcome 2—the spillover effects of collaboration on other education issues such as school grants, teacher trainings, joint township planning, school supplies, and government provision of ethnic language teacher salaries. “Due

to the positive relationship among LESC stakeholders, it has been easier to work on other project activities such as school grant disbursements for non-state schools through the state education office and coordination among stakeholders across the education sector.”⁵⁶

The outcome is also significant in that it provides a model that can be transferred to other states. The example of Mon, including presentations made by MNEC and the Mon State Education Office, provides an example for other states to replicate. The LESC experience in Mon has already been presented to LESC groups in Kayin and Kachin and to national and international audiences at the Mandalay Conference. A national symposium to present the Mon experience to education officers from all states and regions in currently being planned for July 2016 (see Outcome 4).

Contribution: Medium-High. UNICEF’s contribution to the improved relationship between MNEC and MoE in Mon is significant but at the same time should not be overstated. From the interviews across all levels of stakeholders, a clear consensus emerged that no single activity or project, like LESC and/or PBEA, is solely responsible for the improved relationship. This was a multifaceted change involving changes at structural, institutional, and individual levels. It

⁵⁶ LESC country report. Pg. XX

“The constructive and positive relationship that has formed between all stakeholders through the Facilitated Dialogue processes and associated meetings has not only created a sense of ownership and agency around language and education, but resulted in the transfer of collaboration more broadly. Due to the positive relationship among stakeholders, it has been easier to work on other project activities such as school grant disbursements for non-state schools through the state education office and coordination among stakeholders across the education sector.”

~ *LESC Synthesis Report, Pp. 73*

Overall, there is clear evidence that in the perception of those who participated in LESC in Mon, as well as most outside substantiators interviewed, that LESC contributed to increased trust and a strengthened relationship between MNEC and MoE, particularly at the state level. However, further work is needed to strengthen this relationship at the lower township, community, and school levels which will ultimately provide the tangible improvements to the children in those areas. The main conclusion from this outcome is that LESC helped consolidate and further strengthen, but did not originate, earlier relationship gains between MoE and MNEC in Mon.

Unanticipated Consequences: Interviewees and desk review documents highlight a number of unanticipated consequences. Outcome 2 covers many of the positive unanticipated consequences, including how LESC helped encourage collaboration on other important areas like improvements in school and learning environments, teacher training, and township-wide education planning (see proceeding section for details). However, interviewees also cautioned that while maybe not immediately apparent, LESC entails conflict sensitivity risks that

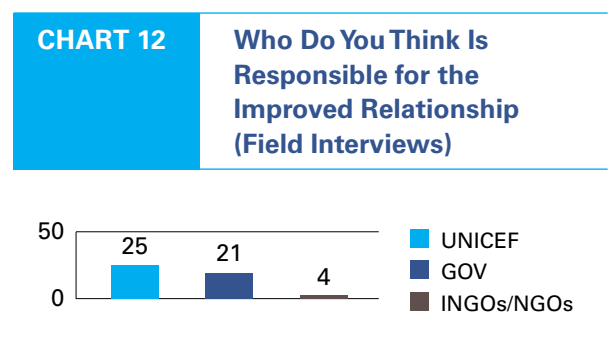
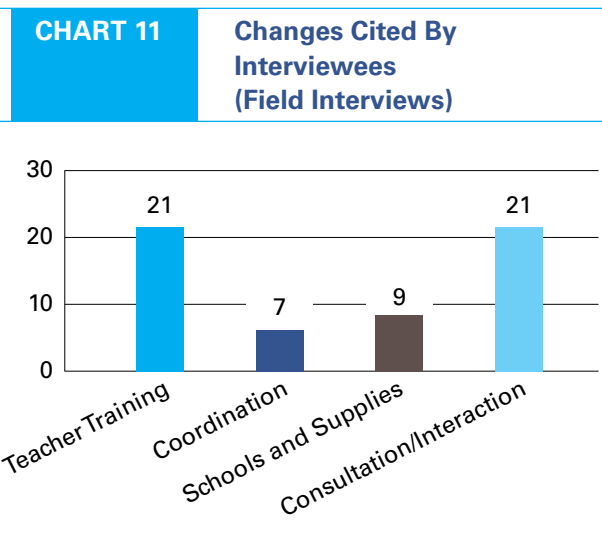
could develop into significant negative consequences. **Chart 10** outlines four key risks identified during the qualitative interviews. The most frequently cited concern was failing to underestimate the importance of the process for developing the policy, not just the end product of the policy itself. This was followed by concerns for what would happen to the “minorities within the minority”, e.g. the Kayin and Pa-Oh in Mon state, and their rights to learn in mother tongue. Respondents, mostly either from the UNICEF team or outside research groups, also cited concerns that LESC would become entangled in the peace process or was happening outside it, as well as concerns that a state language policy may not in the end actually be enacted despite built up public demand.

“Until two or three years ago, the relationship between UNICEF and non-state education providers such as MNEC was rather poor, as the UN agency was considered to be somewhat patronizing and instrumental in its attitude to local education actors. Recently, the relationship has been much more constructive, with MNEC and other Mon educators expressing appreciation for UNICEF’s role in bridging and facilitating relationships with government education officials. As part of a ‘bridging activity’ UNICEF provided small grants to 94 MNEC schools in 2015, via Ministry of Education Township Education Offices. This has been useful for local trust-building/ peacebuilding, but is perceived by some local stakeholders as risking MNEC schools coming under pressure to become government schools (“an example of government ‘colonization’ of our schools”). UNICEF has also facilitated the supply of government (Burmese language) textbooks to 10,000 children in MNEC’S MNS (Grades 1-5). UNICEF’s in-service government teacher training activities have also included MNEC teachers.”

more expansive and also included changes at the school level. Field interviews cited a number of examples of increased interaction between MoE and MNEC (see **Chart 11** below). These generally fell into four categories: teacher trainings (21 references), informal consultation and interaction at township level (21 references), school grants and supplies (9 references), and improved coordination (7 references). Looking across the respondent groups, teachers most frequently mentioned teacher trainings, in particular UNICEF’s SITE and MoE Kindergarten (KG) trainings. This is perhaps not surprising given that this is likely the only activity that they themselves were directly involved in that included the participation of representatives for the “other” side (MoE or MNEC). Interestingly, all four focus groups with MNEC teachers also mentioned that informal collaboration with government teachers had improved although only 1 of 6 focus group with government teachers mentioned this. TEOs would similarly most frequently cite the SITE and KG trainings and also the recent (2015) distribution of UNICEF PBEA-supported schools grants to MNEC through TEOs. This is perhaps not surprising since TEOs would necessarily be involved in the distribution of these grants. State level officials tended to focus more on the formal coordination mechanisms while UNICEF staff generally

spoke to most or all of the activities involved in UNICEF’s Whole State Approach.

When probed, interviewees cited a number of sources as being responsible for bringing about these improvements (see **Chart 12**). As with Outcome 1, awareness of LESC was extremely limited at the community level. While at township level, TEOs did reference LESC, this was almost always in a longer list of the multiple activities supported by UNICEF through its Whole State Approach. Interestingly, while 50% mentioned UNICEF, 42% of respondents also cited the actions of the government as a key reason for the change. These interviews mentioned a more supportive Chief Minister and reforms made during the previous Thein Sein government, as well as expectations for further reforms from the new National League for Democracy (NLD) government. Relatively few respondents (4 of 50 or 8%) mentioned other national and international actors although this may perhaps be explained by an experimentation bias (see **Limitations and Threats to Validity** section) towards wanting to “please the interviewer” as interviewees were introduced as working for or with UNICEF.



When: A key challenge in exploring the veracity of this outcome was determining when various activities were implemented and how they were informed by preceding activities. Both the survey and interviews ask respondents to be as specific as possible in identifying when they noticed changes taking place. An overwhelming majority agreed that changes had taken

place in the last five years (since the beginning of the quasi-civilian Thein Sein government), however, 61% of survey respondents (20 of 33) and 55% of interview respondents (12 of

22) answered in the years following 2013, the year in which UNICEF began implementing its Whole State Approach (see **Chart 13** and **Chart 14** below).

CHART 13 If yes, around what time did you notice the relationship getting better? (n=33)

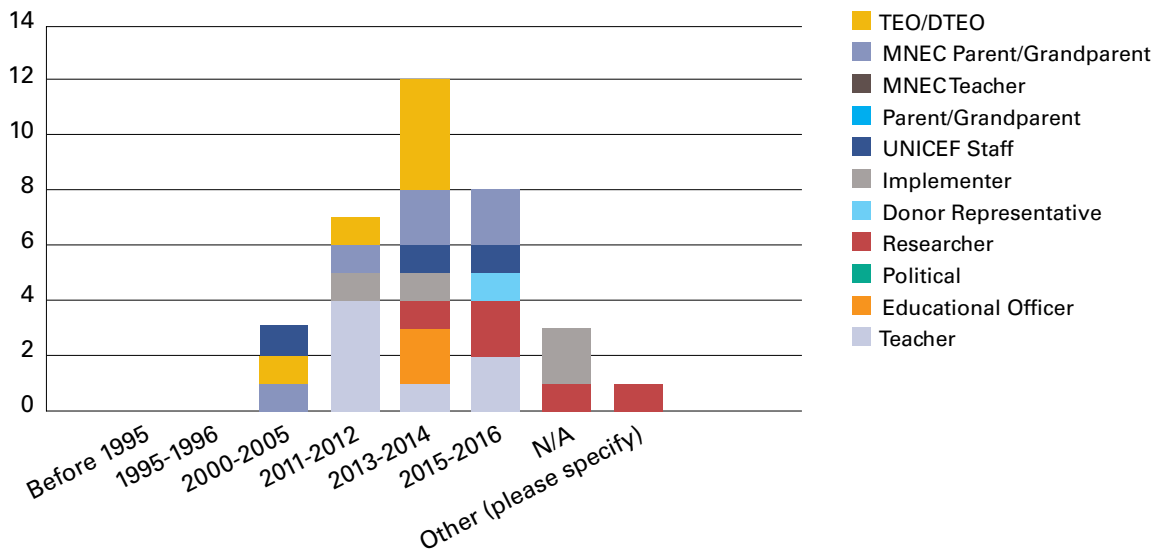
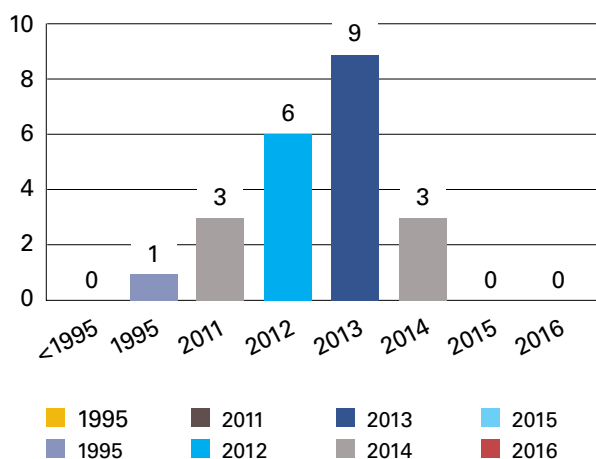


CHART 14 Time of Change (Qualitative Interviews, n=22)



Significance: High. While the challenges of attribution and determining exactly which activity influenced the other is covered in the “contribution” section below, the significance of Mon’s two largest education providers collaborating on other important education issues outside of the language policy is substantial. As stated during interviews with both the State Education Director and MNEC leadership, both parties agree that they are ultimately working towards the same goal: improved education for **all** children in Mon, be it in MoE or MNEC area administered areas. During all interviews conducted (60 of 60), interviewees stated that improved interaction between MoE and MNEC was a positive. However, respondents from MNEC and the outside experts/researcher groups also cautioned that this improve interaction was positive as long as it was not for ulterior motives—i.e. the expansion and eventual takeover of MNEC schools by government schools.

QUOTES FROM THE FIELD

“The Whole State Approach started in 2013. Within three years the behavior changed between MoE and MNEC. MNEC involved in training, sector coordination meetings...trust and confidence building was established. Last month, MNEC invited allTEOs and DEOs to their training. MoE invited MNEC teachers for CFS training and training on school grants. In the 2015-16 academic year, MoE supported textbooks to MNEC...This means the relationship has improved.

~ LESC implementer (Change Agent),
Mawlamyine

“In early years we felt discrimination from UNICEF activities but now for the last 2 or 3 years we don’t feel [this]. Because of [KG] training now teachers have more interaction...government offered hostel for students for the matriculation exams.... We’re now talking about facilitating future trainings for teachers.”

~ MNEC Head Teacher

There is a clear legacy of mistrust in Mon and although the increased interaction is a positive development, it is one step on a longer road of trust building.

Contribution: Partial. A key challenge throughout this Outcome Harvesting has been separating the effects of LESC or broader UNICEF PBEA-supported activities with the effects brought by on other activities, major education reforms, and changes in overall structural environment which clearly also influenced the outcomes identified. As acknowledged through

LESC documents, “Since 2012, the GoM has simultaneously embarked on ambitious economic, political, and administrative reforms, including the removal of strict state control over its population, at the pace that has surprised many in the international community.”⁵⁸ This has included major legislative reforms, both national and specific to the education sector, such as Articles 22, 348, 354, 390, and 450 of the 2008 Constitution; Article 19 and 20c of the 2014 National Education Law (further amended in 2015); the 2015 Ethnic Rights Law; and the 2015 Television and Radio Law which have all sought to protect the status of ethnic minority languages.⁵⁹

The role that 1995 ceasefire and active lobbying of local civil society actors should also be acknowledge. At the state level, the teaching of Mon language in schools has long been a demand of Mon ethnic nationalists. “Particularly since the 1995 NMSP ceasefire, Mon Buddhist monks and civil society groups have developed an impressive network of summer literacy trainings, providing native language and history-culture education to Mon communities.”⁶⁰ Politically, leaders of the All Mon Regions Democracy Party and three other parties in the Nationalities Brotherhood Forum, as well as State National Race ministers, have been requesting “government allow minority language teaching in government schools, at least at primary-school level, in areas with significant ethnic populations.”⁶¹ In 2013, Mon State Parliament released created the Mon Language Curriculum Committee. This eventually led to the development of a new Mon curriculum developed to include Mon language, history, and culture, “making schools in the state the first to teach an ethnic minority language in a government school in more than 50 years.”⁶² Also in 2014, the Mon State Parliament “bill” was interpreted to allow

⁵⁸ UNICEF EAPRO, 2016.

⁵⁹ Mon LESC report.

⁶⁰ Lall and South. “Education, Conflict, and Identity.” March 2012. Pg. 3.

⁶¹ Ibid. Pg. 15.

⁶² “A Preliminary Assessment of Decentralization in Myanmar.” The Asia Foundation. Pg. 5.

interviewees spoke to the potential for such consequences. One independent researcher cautioned, “There are huge risks given history and role of language issue here. Many things to consider—teacher recruitment and not stealing MNEC teachers, KG curriculum and how this relates mother tongue instruction...look at the [2015] student protests—one of the points was on the issue of multilingual education.” Another researcher who has been studying education issues in Myanmar for over a decade warned of the potential internal disputes increased collaboration with government could cause between MNEC and NMSP. The interviewee cited an example where the leaders of MNEC has been publically admonished for their engagement with the SED, Deputy SED, and DEOs and TEOs during a recent workshop. They mentioned that there is a growing schism between MNEC and NMSP when it comes to education with NMSP publically rejecting “any rapprochement with government given their standing with other non-[National Ceasefire Agreement] signatories” and MNEC who “comes out of a history of collaborating at local level. Schools would collaborate with schools, history and language teachers, exams and student transfer.” The interviewee cautioned that UNICEF should be careful in not exacerbating these tensions and consult with individuals more familiar with the internal dynamics of these organizations.

OUTCOME #3: Contribution to Improved Social Cohesion in Mon.

Results statement: LESC, as part of a broader set of activities under the UNICEF Whole State Approach, helped strengthen horizontal social cohesion in Mon.

Who and what changed: Similar to answers provided under Outcome 2, there was consensus among interviewees that UNICEF has contributed to the improved relationship between MNEC and MoE but that the extent to which UNICEF directly influenced that relationship was unclear. As shown in **Chart 15**, 74% (17 of 23) of survey respondents answering felt that UNICEF education activities had helped build social cohesion in Mon. Of the various stakeholder groups answering, researchers were most cautious in answering “yes,” accounting for 3 of 5 answering either “no” or “unsure.” Those answering “yes” were then asked which of the various UNICEF activities they felt helped contribute to improved social cohesion. **Chart 16** next page provides a simple frequency count of activities that interviewees listed as being important for building social cohesion in Mon. Notably, school grants, infrastructure, and school supplies topped the list among all activities supplied by UNICEF, government, or other development partners in Mon. This is perhaps not surprising given that these forms

CHART 15

Do you think that UNICEF education activities have helped promote social cohesion in Mon? (n=23)

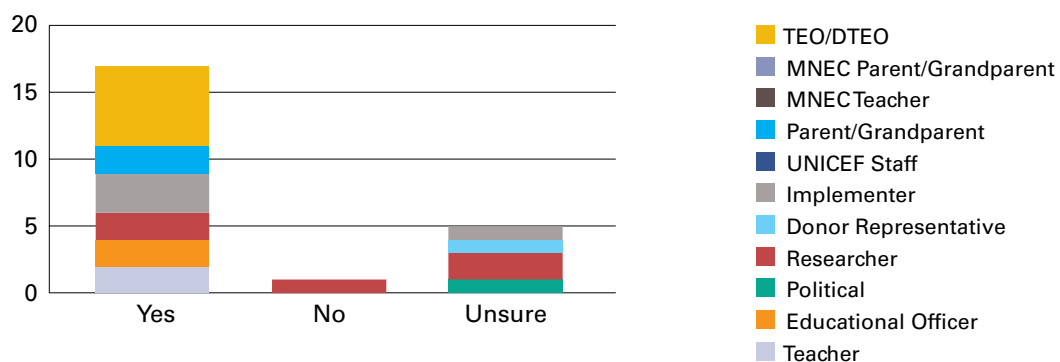
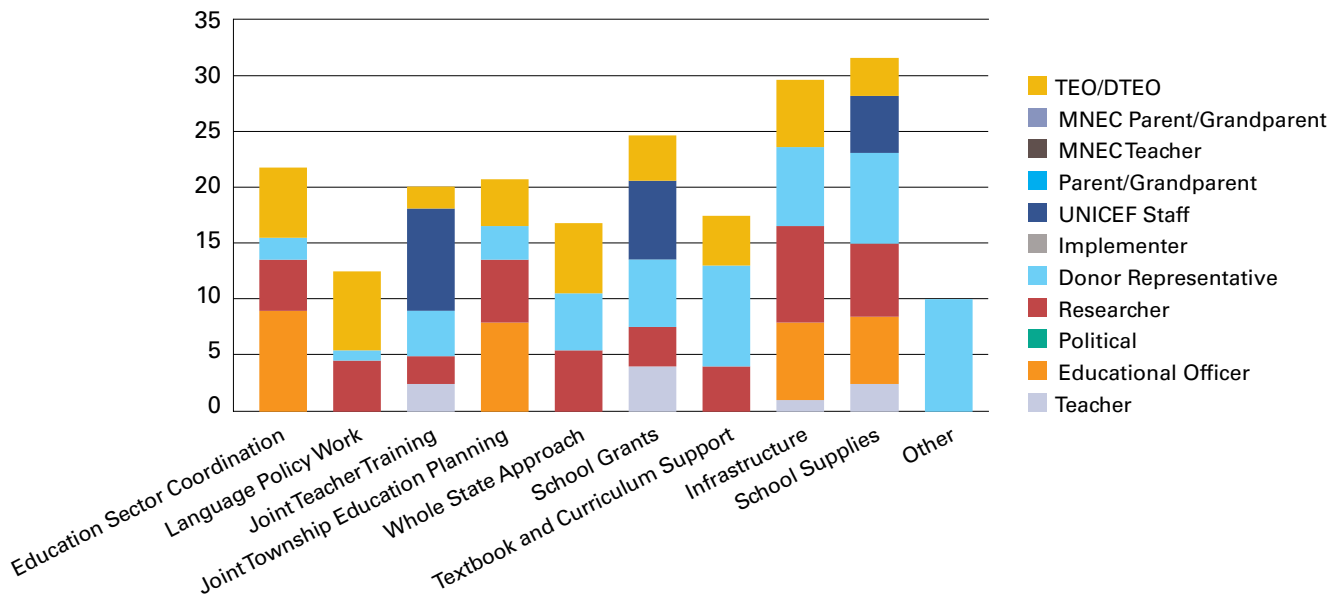


CHART 16

If yes, please rank in order of importance? (n=91)

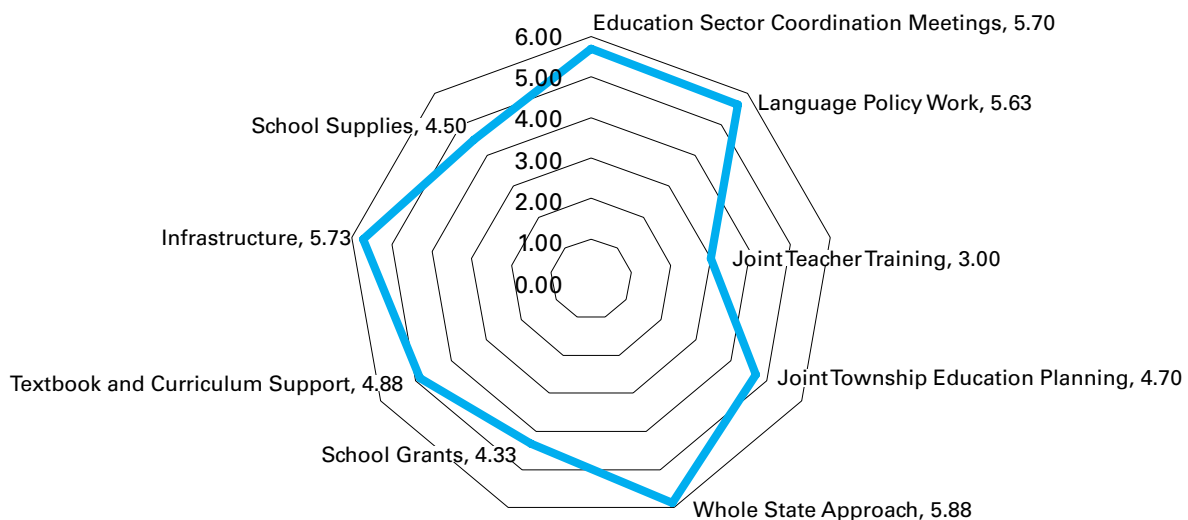


of support are generally more tangible and provide a clearer material benefit in everyday life. Interestingly, while still cited 13% of the time (12 of 91), language policy was the second least commonly cited activity. Again, given the lack of awareness of LESC at the township and school level this is perhaps not surprising.

In addition to frequency of mention, the survey also asked respondents to rank each set of activities in terms of their importance to promoting social cohesion. As depicted in **Chart 17** below, UNICEF’s Whole State Approach ranked as most important for contributing to improved social cohesion, followed by school infrastructure in

CHART 17

Interviewee Ranking of Importance for Social Cohesion (n=91)



conflict affected communities, Education Sector Coordination meeting, and then LESC activities. Interestingly, school supplies, the most frequently cited example and school grants, the third most frequently cited example, were ranked among the lowest in terms of importance for social cohesion. Importantly, as there was generally a low level of awareness of these activities at the township and school level, this question was only asked in the online survey. Respondents were overwhelmingly from the substantiator and change agent groups and therefore the charts above do not capture the rankings from township and school staff. Given that teacher trainings and school grants were the most frequently cited activities during field interviews, the school level activities are likely to have been given much more significance.

When: As seen by interview and survey responses in **Charts 13 and 14** above under Outcome 2 above, 61% of survey respondents (20 of 33) and 55% of interview respondents (12 of 22) answered in the years following 2013, the year in which UNICEF began implementing its Whole State Approach.

“There is a direct correlation between conflict and how people feel about what language and curriculum their children are taught. Armed conflict makes parents and communities less inclined to accept government schools and Burmese language education—rather, conflict is an incentive to create separate (or parallel) systems. Ethnic education regimes tend to be more separatist in character when conflict is rife, and less separatist (more willing to engage, and perhaps integrate with state systems) when ceasefires are in place. To the extent that ethnic education regimes reflect more ‘separatist’ or ‘pro-union’ sentiments, they also play roles in socializing children into such attitudes and understandings.

~TAF

Significance: Significant for horizontal cohesion but not significant for vertical cohesion.

As with Outcome 2 above, improved cohesion between the two largest education actors in Mon state is undoubtedly significant for the school children of Mon state. Improved collaboration is likely to lead to improvements in teaching and learning environments and also support the gradual convergence of the two school systems. However, while the Outcome Harvest found evidence of improved horizontal cohesion between the education providers in Mon, it did not find compelling evidence that improved education activities have yet translated into improved vertical cohesion between government and community members in Mon. Parents overall were minimally aware of the improved collaboration between MoE and MNEC and none had heard of either LESC or State language “bill.”

Contribution: High for horizontal cohesion between education actors, low for vertical cohesion between government and Mon citizens.

There is clear evidence both in the perception and actions of MoE and MNEC, as well as corroborated by outside researchers and secondary sources that the horizontal cohesion between education actors has improved in the last 3-5 years. There is also strong evidence that UNICEF’s Whole State Approach played a leading role in strengthening this cohesion. The evidence is less clear on LESC’s specific contribution, with a higher contribution noted at state level and lower contribution at township and community levels. While the Outcome Harvest design did not include larger scale public perception surveys, the extent to which LESC contributed to improved vertical cohesion is likely low given the low level of familiarity at the community level. Also, while it is expected that UNICEF’s Whole State Approach, particularly its more tangible, material-focused support such as school grants and supplies, would help improve vertical cohesion between the government of Myanmar and the people of Mon state, the Outcome Harvest did not find sufficient evidence prove this has been the case.

Unanticipated Consequences: The Outcome Harvest did not find any unanticipated consequences directly stemming from the improved social cohesion. While any consequences resulting from improved social cohesion are generally expected to be positive, the potential risks and concerns noted under Outcome 1 and 2 hold for Outcome 3 as well. The unanticipated consequences are likely to be positive as long as there is not a breakdown in trust and that MoE and MNEC do not misuse these activities to unduly expand their influence in each other’s areas.

OUTCOME #4: Increased awareness of the importance of MTB-MLE

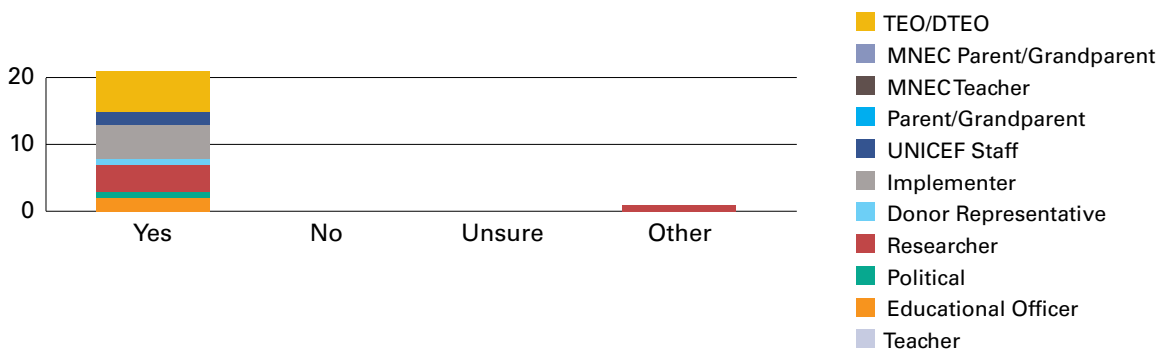
Results statement: LESC activities, advocacy, and dissemination increased public awareness of the benefits from the use of MTB-MLE in early grades in Mon and across Myanmar.

Who and what changed: State and Union level MoE officials and broader public. Of the 22 respondents responding, 100% (22 of 22) answered that they felt that LESC has helped raise the awareness of MTB-MLE (see **Chart 18** below). Additional evidence supporting this result statement is derived from the increased

coverage that the issue of MTB-MLE has received in national English-language newspapers⁶⁴ as well as the participation of 384 participants from 37 countries at Mandalay Language Conference. These participants involved not just MoE, MNEC, and other ethnic education providers from Mon, Kayin, and Kachin, but also a number of international scholars, Myanmar Language and English language media outlets, and high level representatives from MoE. This included a plenary presentation by the Director General of the Department of Myanmar Education and Research on the importance of mother tongue for the education of Myanmar children. Further evidence can also be found in recent calls from parliamentarians and political party leaders, including the Mon National Party and NLD for the government to do more to promote the use of MTB-MLE.⁶⁵

However, the most significant evidence for this result comes from the Minister of Education’s recent decision to host a nationwide symposium to share the Mon LESC experience as well as experiences in Kayin and Kachin.⁶⁶ The event entitled, “Sharing Experience on Development of Facilitated Dialogues on National Language Planning,” is scheduled for July 11-12, 2016 and will be co-sponsored by the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Ethnic Affairs. About

CHART 18 Do you think that this work has helped raise awareness of MTB-MLE? (n=22)



⁶⁴ Reference various media articles

⁶⁵ “Lawmakers Highlight Shortcoming in Ethnic Language Teaching.” The Irrawaddy. June 10, 2016.

⁶⁶ See “Meeting Minutes for Language Symposium Planning Team.” June 13, 2016. Internal UNICEF document.

100 attendees are expected, including State Ethnic Ministers, State Education Directors, state parliamentarians, ethnic education providers, and representatives from three university, Myanmar Language Commission, MoE, language and literacy groups, and civil society. The event can be directly attributed to the work of LESC.

When: February 2014-Present. While initially awareness was raised in early 2014 for those participating in LESC workshops in Mon, evidence of national level awareness is more recent. Perhaps the most significant event was the Mandalay Language Conference in February 2015 and its associated publicity. However, the planned July language symposium is likely to have an equally important effect on spreading awareness, particularly to those states and regions not presently involved in LESC.

Significance: High. The significance and potential follow-on effects of the increased national awareness on the importance of MTB-MLE is considerable. The fact that LESC has received public approval from the Minister of Education and Minister of Ethnic Affairs cannot be underestimated in the highly hierarchical systems of line ministries in Myanmar. Such endorsement is likely to cascade down the two bureaucracies and result in either explicit policy directive or tacit endorsement from SEDs, DEOs, and TEOs for the use of MTB-MLE in local classrooms. Given the evidence of the numerous advantages offered by MTB-MLE in terms of improved learning, lower dropout rates, improved acquisition of others languages, and employability,⁶⁷ LESC has the potential to be the most far reaching activity supported by PBEA Myanmar.

Contribution: High. Although attribution is not possible given the lack of relevant baseline data, given statements made directly by MoE officials and the prominence of LESC events and related publicity, it is reasonable to conclude that LESC's contribution is considerable. While school level experiences and informal advocacy

have undoubtedly supported the project, LESC is directly responsible for elevating school, township, and state level discussion of the use of MTB-MLE to a national conversation held in formal settings and public view.

QUOTES FROM THE FIELD

"UNICEF has two value-added, (1) good offices of the UN – the way that UN can play convening role, facilitating role in a way that bilaterals and NGOs can't and (2) technical expertise and the weight/authority – UNICEF and Joe coming in and clearly taking MTB-MLE takes it serious gives credibility to stakeholders interested in MTB-MLE. However, we need to also credit goodwill of government, think that many TEOs are ethnic Mon that really do care about ethnic education. Think ultimately that it's the vision, leadership of the MNEC—ultimately the success rests upon their experience and ceasing the opportunities.

~Substantiator, Chang Mai

"I think our contribution has been really unique. Ethnic conflict is complex. Language you can deal with, it's technical. Systematic way of addressing conflict – moving people from positions to possible solutions."

~LESC implementer, Yangon

Unanticipated consequences: As with the other outcomes, the Outcome Harvest did not find that any negative consequences had yet materialized, although a risk remains that the momentum built by LESC does not in the end result in state or Union level policies. It is difficult to predict the extent of possibly disillusionment would have, however it would almost certainly diminish public confidence in ongoing education reforms.

⁶⁷ See UNICEF EAPRO, 2016 or "Mandalay Language Conference Guide."

5

OVERARCHING CONCLUSIONS



■ The Outcome Harvest identified four outcomes resulting from LESC:

- (1) increased trust and strengthened relationships between state level MoE and MNEC stakeholders;
- (2) improved collaboration on education issues in Mon in addition to language policy;
- (3) strengthened horizontal social cohesion among education actors in Mon; and
- (4) increased awareness on the importance and benefit of using MTB-MLE in early grades.

One of the four outcomes, Outcome 4 is most attributable to LESC and holds the potential to have the largest impact nationally. 100% of survey respondents responding (22 of 22)—mostly from the substantiator, education state and township education officials, and change agents stakeholder groups—answered that they felt that LESC has helped raise the awareness of the importance of MTB-MLE. Evidence for this outcome was also found in increased media coverage around the issue of MTB-MLE during the life of LESC, including several articles making explicit reference to the project. However, the most significant evidence of the increased awareness is found in the recent decision by the Minister of Education to organize a national symposium on language in education. This is a striking departure from the just 3 years ago when this issue was only tacitly acknowledge and rarely openly discussed. Given the way in which Union level policies are stringently followed by lower state, district, and township education officers, any directive, policy, or even tacit endorsement of the right to use MTB-MTL is likely to have far-reaching impact. Considering the wealth of empirical evidence confirming the numerous advantages offered by MTB-MLE LESC has the potential to be the most far reaching activity supported by PBEA Myanmar.

LESC has also had a strong contribution to Outcome 1 although other initiatives both internal and external have also had significant influence. The Outcome Harvest found that 83% (38 of 46) of respondents indicated that they had seen evidence of an improved relationship

between MoE and MNEC first hand. Of these, 74% (17 of 23) answered that they felt that LESC specifically had contributed to this improved relationship. These survey responses were corroborated by in-depth field interviews and secondary sources studied during the desk review. 63% (25 of 40) of those answering that they had seen an improvement in the relationship between MoE and MNEC felt that UNICEF had contributed to these changes. However, while there was clear evidence that an improvement in relationship had occurred at state level, and that UNICEF had contributed to that improvement, there was also strong evidence that this improvement is yet to trickle down to the community or school levels. No single teacher, parent, or grandparent interviewed was aware of LESC or even the Mon State Parliament support for the teaching of ethnic language in government schools outside regular school hours. This, however, needs to be considered along with the fact that LESC never explicitly targeted results below the township level and that all TEOs interviewed reported being familiar with both LESC and the Mon State Parliament “bill.” The latter is encouraging and demonstrates that LESC and UNICEF more broadly does have the ability to raise awareness below the state level. Additional time and effort is needed if LESC want to translate state level successes into community and school level implementation of the policy developed.

The importance of Outcome 1 is captured by Outcome 2 showing that trust and relationship building resulting from Outcome 1 has helped encourage collaboration between MoE and MNEC on other education issues. While less attributable to LESC, improved collaboration can be seen over the life of LESC on issues such as school grants, teacher trainings, joint township planning, school supplies, and government provision of ethnic language teacher salaries. These outcomes represent significant milestones on the path to creating a more unified, inclusive, and coherent response to meet the education needs of all children across

6

LESSONS LEARNED



2. Engagement of parents and community members in education activities is critical for producing tangible results. LESC has made strides in improving relationships at state level in Mon but has done relatively little thus far to engage parents and community members. This finding matches a pattern established in the monthly DE reports on the consistent observation by education field colleagues for the need to engage parents and community members to facilitate the

spread and sustainability of results. While the field office reports tended to focus on the need to facilitate parental and community awareness and support for non-formal and early childhood development activities, the same lesson holds for LESC. The Outcome Harvest consistently found that state level results were only minimally trickling down to the township level and had almost no influence at the community and school levels.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 2

Adaptations of existing or “business as usual” approaches

3. Conflict contexts have unique characteristics and activities designed for “regular”, non-conflict areas cannot simply be replicated whole form in conflict areas. This was one of the main lessons learned derived from the larger Myanmar DE data collection. While this lesson seems simplistic on its surface, its implementation proves more difficult given pressures to scale up successful activities and budget utilization. While the horizontal exchange between education actors in different location is important for knowledge sharing, UNICEF needs to analyze and understand how these contexts vary and the extent to which their intervention influences these contexts. This is a fundamental requirement for conflict sensitivity.

For a variety of reasons—including early successes in Mon and an ambitious timeline for implementation—UNICEF and the LESC team has replicated the process used in Mon in conflict affected Kayin and Kachin. These areas have unique characteristics that separate them from Mon, including non-state school systems not aligned with the government curriculum and active areas of conflict, and a few interviewees for the Outcome

Harvest cautioned that UNICEF might actually be “doing harm” in implementing the Mon model in these areas.

This lesson mirrors findings from the monthly reports highlighting interviews with Country Office and Rakhine field office colleagues. These colleagues lamented that there had been an implicit assumption during the development of the Multi Year Work Plan that regular activities could quickly and easily be expanded into conflict areas. One clear example provided was teacher trainings in Rakhine where travel restrictions for Muslim teachers means that they are effectively prevented from attending trainings held outside their restricted areas. To remedy this, UNICEF Myanmar adapted its programming to plan, budget, and implement duplicate trainings in both Muslim and non-Muslim areas to ensure that all sides are able to receive training.

4. Interestingly, LESC deviated considerably from an earlier pattern of PBEA activities tending to be more reactionary and opportunistic rather than intentionally designed to address conflict drivers. As noted in the monthly DE reports, over 60 percent of total PBEA funding was used to support

Lessons Learned Conducting a DE within UNICEF

1. Important and unique contribution in encouraging internal reflection within Country Office. One of the clearest contributions of the DE has been its role in promoting internal understanding, dialogue, and reflection within the Education team. As documented in the earlier monthly reports, a number of staff expressed frustration that the PBEA Myanmar design had been rushed and not clearly communicated to education staff not directly involved in its implementation. The majority of staff reported being minimally aware that PBEA aimed to promote “social cohesion” but could provide few specifics on where, why, or how. The regular discussions and reflections on PBEA’s underlying assumptions and theory of change, as well as early evidence produced by smaller evaluative exercises on mine risk education in Kachin and Southeast, conflict sensitivity in Rakhine, and language policy development in Mon, helped raise awareness of PBEA activities within the education team and outside partners such as the QBEP donors, Yangon Peace Advisors group, and education sub-working groups. One concrete result emerging from this increased awareness was the decision taken by the Country Management Team to engage an outside consultant on how to improve conflict sensitivity and new opportunities to support peacebuilding through regular programming as part of the 2018-2022 Country Program development process.

The DE has also helped demonstrate the value of having staff specifically focused on providing regular research and reflection across the Country Office. Country Office staff regularly lament that their heavy workload, internal fund utilization pressures, and unique challenges of working with and through Myanmar line ministries leave few chances for critical discussion around underlying assumptions, casual pathways,

or intended results. While the PBEA DE provided a unique opportunity to have a staff member dedicated to regular reflection financed through project funding, the Country Office would benefit considerably by promoting and providing opportunities for a more reflective approach to programming within and across sections.


2. Clarity of scope and intended use of DE. In terms of implementing a DE, a clear lesson learned was on the importance of carefully articulating the scope and intended use of the DE. While the 2013 PBEA evaluability assessment recommended DE or another type “bottom up” evaluation approach, it did not provide many details on how it envisioned the evaluation being used by UNICEF staff. Likewise, while the DE concept note circulated with the original TOR provided a succinct overview of DE methodology in general, it too did not provide details on how UNICEF staff could use the information or key activity areas to focus on. This was likely by design given DE’s commitment to emergence, however, the lack of a clear strategy for use with high-level Country Office endorsement made it difficult to implement. This was compounded significantly by the fact that this DE was a pilot for UNICEF. The fact that no-one within either UNICEF NYHQ or the country office had experience implementing a UNICEF DE meant that staff were unclear on the exact steps to follow and when information from the DE should or could be implemented. The fact that UNICEF staff are implementing activities based on a Multi-Year Work Plan agreed with government, coupled with the heavy workload of education staff, resulted in the DE struggling to identify clear opportunities to use information emerging from the DE to adapt implementation, particularly if this entailed significant deviations from the Multi-Year Work Plan.

7

RECOMMENDATIONS



3



Recommendation: LESC implementers should explore and strengthen collaboration with education partners already working in LESC project areas.

Another area where LESC implementers could strengthen LESC, particularly in more politically sensitive areas and areas where UNICEF has less extensive networks, is to more actively engage education partners already working with ethnic education providers. This could be achieved by: (1) inviting potential partners to various dissemination events; (2) producing brief communication materials outlining the

main aims of LESC, its underlying assumptions and casual logic, and its anticipated timeline; and (3) UNICEF could consider issuing a solicitations for national and international partners to deepen their awareness of LESC activities and look to build synergies with their ongoing activities.

This recommendation can be implemented in the short term (3-12 months). ■

4




Recommendation: UNICEF and LESC implementers should gradually draw down its leadership role and look for ways to encourage MoE to take a more leading role in the development of future policies.

In order to help strengthen vertical cohesion and remedy a perception that LESC is a UNICEF-driven initiative, UNICEF and LESC implementers should gradually draw down the prominence of their leadership in the LESC initiative. While there is evidence that LESC has

always intended to gradually drawn down its leadership role, a more explicit transition strategy could be developed.

This recommendation can be implement in the short-to-medium term (1-3 years). ■

5



Recommendation: LESC implementers, working with the broader UNICEF Education Team, should explore and disseminate community based responses to key resource constraints such as the lack of ethnic language teachers and learning materials.

One of the largest challenges to ultimately implementing any language policy developed under LESC will be to respond to the inevitable resource constraints. Both the MoE system and in particular the MNEC system have too few teacher and learning materials to respond to the learning needs of their ethnic minority students. While additional resources have been promised by the Ministry of Education, and potentially by the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs in the future, the

Outcome Harvest found evidence that communities are already implementing local solutions to support MTB-MLE in classrooms. UNICEF and LESC implementers, working through their field offices, could help document and disseminate these solutions through community trainings, consultations, or larger conferences and evidence summits.

This recommendation can be implement in the short-to-medium term (1-3 years). ■

inputs and support to bring them to a level where an evaluation effort would yield information that would enable credible findings/conclusions. The differential progress that country programmes have made towards implementation, diverse country contexts, the complexity of the PBEA, and indeed the advice of the evaluability assessment, point to a need for a well thought out and non-conventional end-of-programme evaluation effort.

4. The evaluability assessment also noted that using the conventional ex-post facto evaluation design - aggregating the contribution of education to peacebuilding across country programmes and selecting a sample of programmes for in-depth field work – would not represent PBEA results (or the lack thereof) adequately, nor will it capture the lessons that PBEA programming has to offer. Instead a “bottom-up” evaluation design was deemed more suitable to capture the diversity of interventions and themes, broad variations in country programme profiles, and variations in navigating programming complexity.
5. In addition to the advice on the evaluation approach, the evaluability assessment also made strong observations on the need to balance accountability to funding authorities with seizing the opportunity to capture emergent learning. Hence two major evaluative activities are proposed for the PBEA; an exercise to assist in the systematic documentation of the lessons of PBEA development and implementation over a period of 18 months or so, and a summative evaluation during the final quarter of the programme. The first evaluative activity will be based on the somewhat evolving thinking of ‘developmental evaluation’ (DE) – recruiting suitable personnel for the first evaluative activity is the subject of this terms of reference.

II. PURPOSE OF THE DE AND ITS RATIONALE

6. DE is an approach that injects evaluative thinking and supports adaptive learning in complex initiatives. This design combines the rigor of evaluation methodologies with the flexibility and creativity that is required in seeking solutions to development problems, typically involving innovation, high levels of uncertainty, and tackling social complexity (Patton, 2008; Gamble, 2008; Dozois, Langlois and Blanchet-Cohen, 2010). DE seems to be an appropriate design for capturing the learning that ensues in a programme as complex as the PBEA.
7. To commence in 2014 in two of the country programmes that are still in the early stages of implementation, this component will be executed by a three person evaluation team. One consultant will be a senior (experienced) lead evaluator who has experience conducting or supervising a DE, who will conceptualize and guide the technical execution of the evaluation. The other members of the team will be two support evaluators, each working from within a country programme as an integral part of the country programme team.

III. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION AND METHODOLOGY

8. **Scope:** As previously stated, the evaluation’s purpose is to systematically capture the learning that can be infused into the programme to heighten its chances for success. Hence, the evaluation will provide comprehensive and evidence-based answers to two overarching questions, namely,
 - a. *Are the programme impact pathways stipulated for the PBEA feasible/credible and likely to produce the intended results and/or outcomes? and,*

b. *What new learning and/or improvements were effected to improve attainment of results and/or outcomes?*

The evaluation will cover two to three key outcomes that will be selected by the country programme team for intensive monitoring and study through the developmental evaluation. The evaluation will be based on a learning framework which will develop sub-questions that are customized to the programming context, as well as criteria for weighing the evidence on each question.

9. **Methodology:** Given that it is an adaptive, context-specific approach, the methodology of a DE is usually largely informed by the theme/subject matter under investigation and context. Its practice offers a great opportunity for innovation and experimenting with new ideas, even in terms of the approach and methodology. However, DE primers (Dozois, 2010) have identified entry points, practices and organizing tools that are emerging as part of the methodology for a DE investigation. Below are some of the steps, in building the methodology for the proposed DE, adapted from Dozois, 2010 and tailored more to the context of PBEA.

- **Orienting the evaluation team:** Evaluators undertake investigative work early in the initiative in order to build a deeper understanding of the identified problem or opportunity, resources, stakeholders and broader context. This could be a good starting point for the developmental evaluation of the PBEA.
- **Building relationships:** The quality of relationships determines the degree to which the team can access information and influence change. For this reason, the methodology should consider a mapping of relationships that are critical to execute the DE, and a strategy to keep people engaged in the evaluation.

- **Orienting the implementation team (the country programme team):** Related to the point above, a key part of the evaluators' role is to help stakeholders test their assumptions, articulate and refine their models, extend their understanding, and cultivate a culture that supports learning. These activities will likely help the PBEA country teams to develop and maintain an adaptive orientation in complex and unknown territory.
- **Developing a learning framework:** A learning framework is a good tool for DE practice. Working in collaboration with key stakeholders, developing a learning framework (slightly different from an evaluation framework), will guide the evaluation by mapping out potential areas for learning (and identify both opportunities and challenges), identifying data and/or evidence that is required to make decisions, and to articulate feedback mechanisms.
- **Observing:** Evaluators carefully observe the unfolding situation in order to help the group identify leverage points, assess their efforts, and stay true to the core intent and principles of their initiative. Evaluators should (i) key developmental moments; (ii) group structure (iii) group dynamics; (iv) action or inaction; and (v) opportunities and threats. PBEA should be able to benefit from a sustained evaluation effort that can bring a better calibration of impacts of micro-level solutions on a macro-level conflict.
- **Sense-making:** Sense-making is largely about making sense of the data that has been collected. The evaluator's role is to help the group identify patterns, integrate new information, and consider the implications of their observations, and propose solutions.

- **Intervening:** As a member of the programme team, evaluators actively help to shape the work by: (i) asking questions; (ii) facilitating discussion; (iii) sourcing or providing information; (iv) modeling solutions; (v) and, making new connections.
10. The evaluation (with inputs from the Support Evaluator) will finalize the methodology for the DE, based on these rudimentary steps, and to enrich it with his/her knowledge and experience. Additional resources for building an evaluation methodology centered on reflective practice include guidance on evaluation peace-building interventions, (OECD/DAC, 2012; Reimann, Chigas, and Woodrow, 2012; and Rogers, 2012).

IV. TASKS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITIES

The **lead evaluator (LE)**, contracted by the UNICEF Evaluation Office, will be responsible for leading the evaluation efforts from a global perspective. He/she will have overall responsibility for the technical guidance of the DE and its quality, and will be responsible for the following:

- a. Conceptualize and develop the DE design and methodology, including the evaluation/learning framework, and this/her own work plan;
- b. Provide inputs in the recruitment of the support evaluators, as well as guide and supervise them;
- c. Develop a DE module and other materials as he/she sees fit. This is a guidebook that the support evaluators can use and/or refer to in their duty stations;
- d. Orient and/or coach of the evaluation team and review work plans for country level evaluation efforts, including and agreeing with support evaluators on a set of deliverables.

- e. Undertake quality assurance missions to the participating countries;
 - f. Provide on-going desk-based quality assurance of all outputs, including reviewing periodic country outputs/reports, and final report of the evaluation;
 - g. In conjunction with the support evaluators, provide milestone reports to the Chief of Education (or PBEA focal point) in each participating country; and,
 - h. Ensure that the evaluation manager (Evaluation Specialist in UNICEF New York) is regularly informed of the progress of the evaluation, possible causes of delay and issues to resolve.
11. **Two support evaluators (to be contracted through a different but related process)** will be responsible for the following;
- a. Adapting the methodology of the DE to the country context, clear it with the lead evaluator, and finalize the inception report for the country evaluation;
 - b. Develop and implement a work plan for evaluation activities;
 - c. Direct the execution of the DE and assure its quality at the country level;
 - d. Monitoring and tracking of the data that is required to inform decisions on the evaluation;
 - e. Compiling progress reports according to an agreed schedule, clearing them with the lead evaluator, and presenting them to the Chief of Education, Monitoring & Evaluation Chief/ (or designated PBEA focal point);
 - f. Make agreed inputs into other milestone reports, including developing PowerPoint presentations (draft and final report for the country-level evaluation); and

B. Sources Consulted

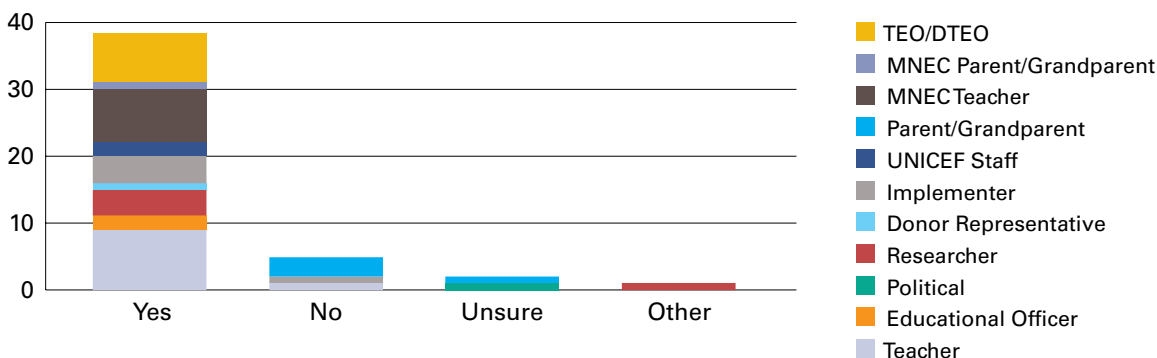
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C. People Consulted

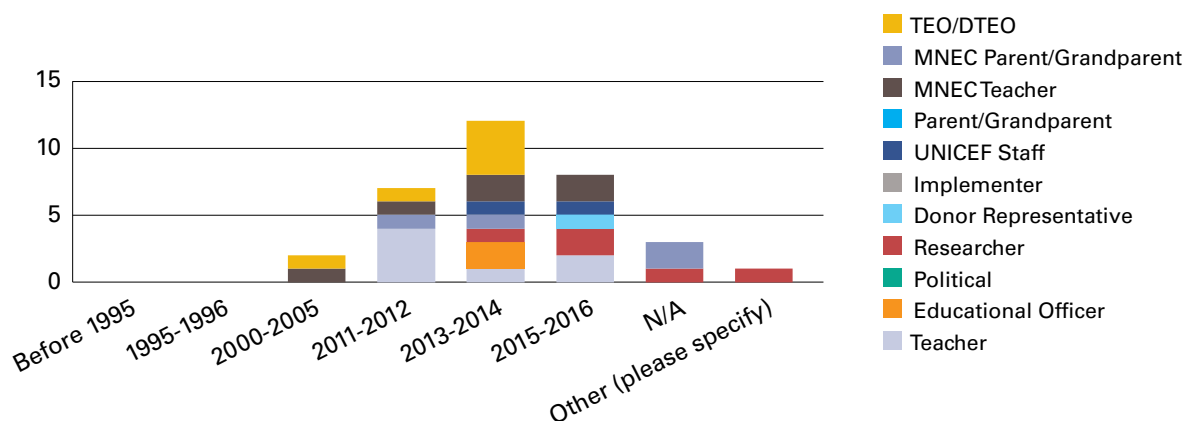
Respondent Overview – Field Interviews				
Location	Org Type	Interview Type	Male	Female
Bilin	Gov Teachers	FGD		4
Bilin	Parents (Karen)	FGD		7
Bilin	Students (Karen)	FGD	3	3
Bilin	TEO/DTEO	KII	1	
Bilin Total			4	14
Kyaikmaraw	Gov Teachers	FGD		6
Kyaikmaraw	MNECTeachers	FGD		2
Kyaikmaraw	Parents (Gov)	FGD	2	3
Kyaikmaraw	Parents (MNEC)	FGD	1	1
Kyaikmaraw	Students (Gov)	FGD	2	2
Kyaikmaraw	Students (MNEC)	FGD	2	2
Kyaikmaraw Total			7	16
Mawlamyine	Change Agent	FGD	1	2
Mawlamyine	MNEC	FGD	2	1
Mawlamyine	Researcher	FGD	1	3
Mawlamyine	Change Agent	KII		1
Mawlamyine	SED	KII	1	
Mawlamyine	Change Agent	KII	1	
Mawlamyine	CSO	KII	1	
Mawlamyine	CSO	KII	1	
Mawlamyine	CSO	KII	1	
Mawlamyine	Curriculum Dev	KII		1
Mawlamyine	Change Agent	KII		1
Mawlamyine Total			9	9
Mix	Teachers (Gov)	FGD	1	4
Mix Total			1	4
Mudon	Parents (Gov)	FGD	2	2
Mudon	Gov Teachers	FGD		7
Mudon	Parents (MNEC)	FGD	1	5
Mudon	Students (Gov)	FGD	2	2
Mudon	Students (MNEC)	FGD	2	4
Mudon	TEO/DTEO	SGD	2	
Mudon	MNECTeachers	FGD		4
Mudon Total			9	24
Other	Researcher	KII	1	
Other	Implementer	KII		1
Other	Researcher	KII		1

D. Complete Survey Charts

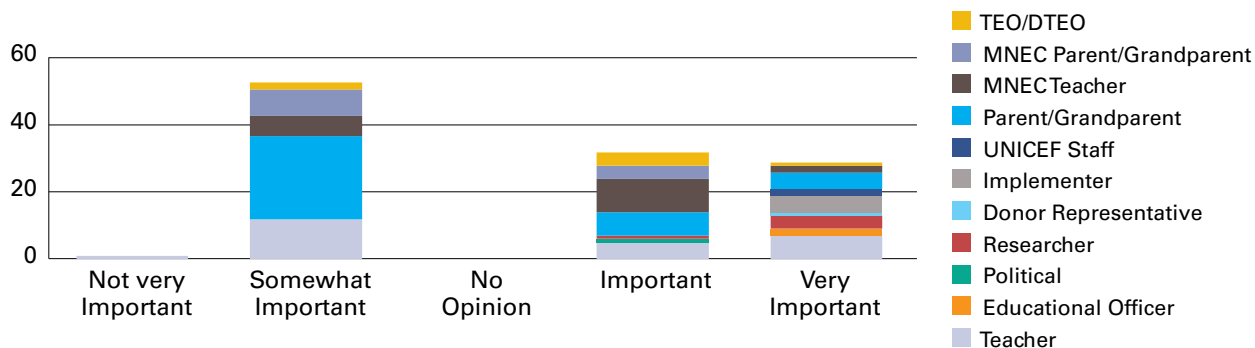
Have you seen any evidence of an improved relationship between MoE and MNEC in Mon? (n=46)



If yes, around what time did you notice the relationship getting better? (n=33)



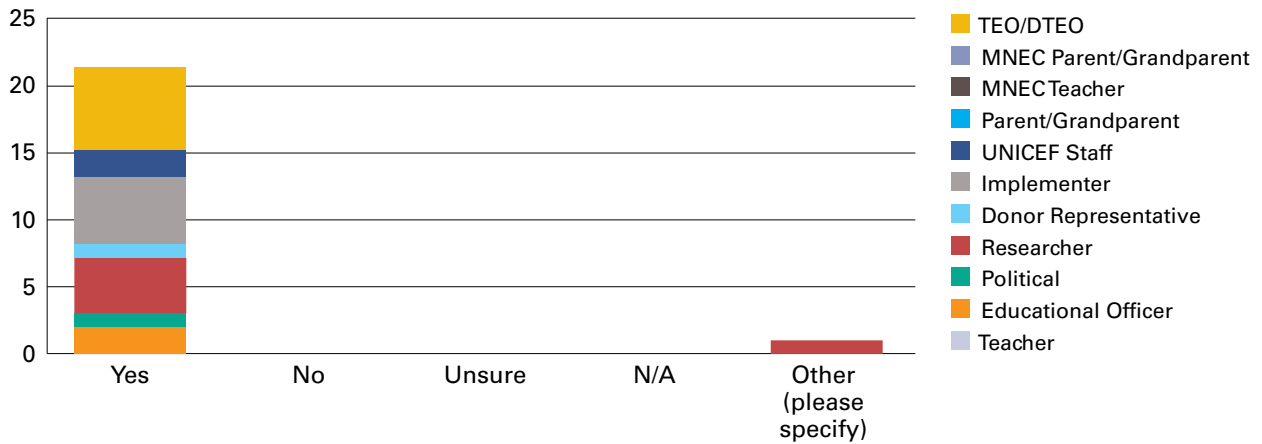
Please select one of the following: I believe that the right for children to learn in their mother-tongue is: (n=115)



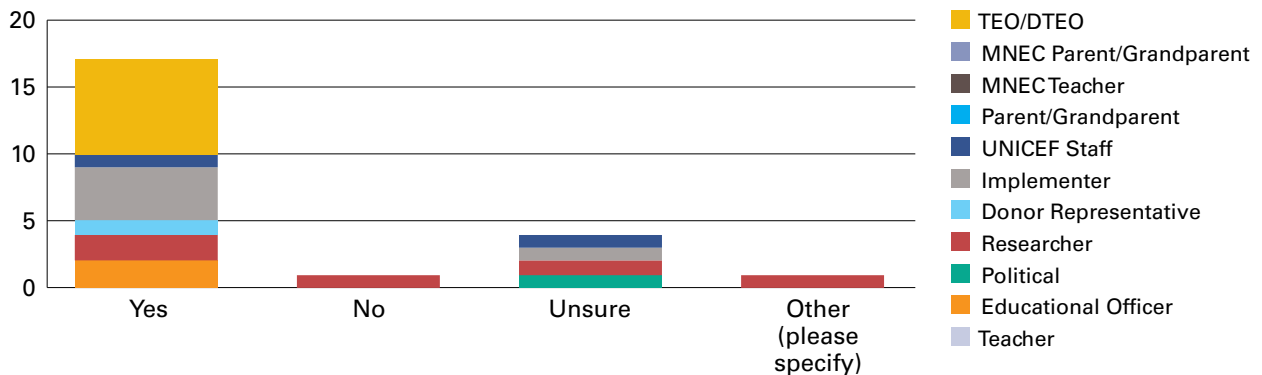
Are you familiar with UNICEF's Mon Language in Education Policy Work? (n=24)



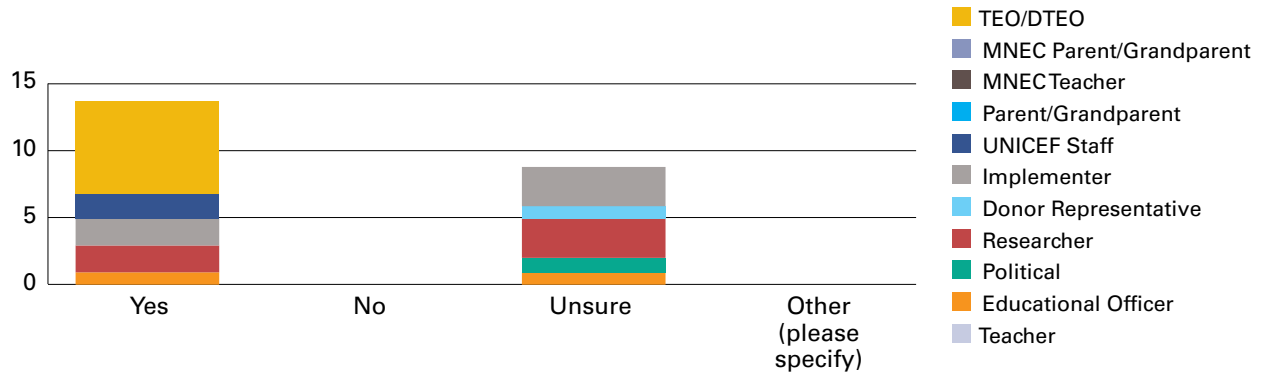
Do you think that this work has helped raise awareness of MTB-MLE? (n=22)



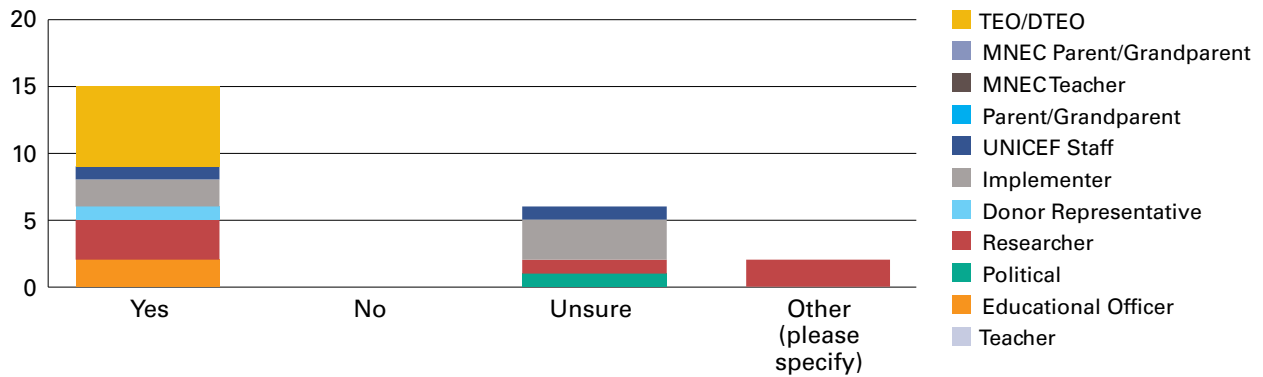
Do you think that this work has improved relationships between MoE and MNEC? (n=23)



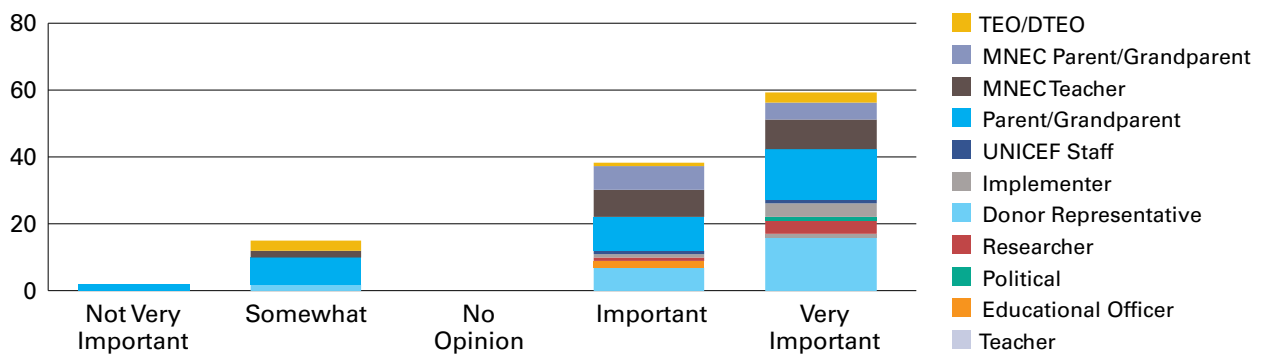
Do you think that this work has improved relationships between different ethnic groups that participated? (n=23)



Do you think that participants built their capacity in joint policymaking? (n=23)



How important is language for the preservation of identity? (n=114)



E. Mon Draft Policy Statement

LANGUAGE POLICY DECLARATION MON STATE, 2016

PRINCIPLES

The Mon State language policy is written in accordance with the legal framework of Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (2008), articles 22, 348, 354, 390 and 450, the Myanmar National Education Law, 2014/41 (as amended 2015/38), Articles 2, 3 and 9 of the Ethnic Rights Law of 2015 and Articles 67 and 77 of the Television and Radio (Broadcasting) Law 2015/53. It is inspired by the Naypyitaw Principles for the Development of Peace-Promoting National Language Policy for Myanmar, and WAS guided and produced through democratic and open process of Facilitated Dialogues, extensive consultations and debate with hundreds of citizens.

Mon State proudly declares its commitment to a comprehensive and coordinated language policy for all living languages of residents in the state, not exclusively to the four large community languages of Mon, Myanmar, Karen languages and Pa'o.

The policy recognises that Mon state has a special historic obligation to preserve, develop and support Mon language and its ancient script and acknowledges its responsibility to speakers of Mon language who reside outside of Mon state elsewhere in the Union and internationally. In the spirit of democratic citizenship and cultural and human rights, Mon state also declares its full and equal commitment to language preservation, development, and enjoyment for all ethnic groups and Sign Language users residing within the territorial boundaries of Mon State.

Further, the Mon State language policy acknowledges its obligation to support all residents to acquire full proficiency and literacy in the official Union language of Myanmar and proclaims its recognition of the importance of advanced knowledge of English, Thai, Chinese and other international languages for communication and livelihoods.

ELABORATION

Language and literacy are fundamental to the development, modernization and advancement of the country and provide unique opportunities for individuals to achieve their aims in life and improve their circumstances. From early childhood to tertiary education, in delivering services in hospitals, government administration, international trade and diplomacy, in domestic law and human rights, as Myanmar develops into a stronger democracy a national language policy will support, strengthen and develop all aspects of life. A national language policy is to be supported by state language policies which respond to the specific needs of the ethnic states and regions of the country. Mon state welcomes the major breakthrough in working towards a comprehensive multilingual language policy which was achieved at the Facilitated Dialogues on a Peace-Promoting Language Policy in Naypyitaw in 2014 and 2015 through the Naypyitaw principles. These nine principles allow local variation of language measures while producing national consistency and coordination. Language policy discussions are a vital instrument offering significant national benefits in promoting peace and reconciliation, supporting the education of minority children, improving social cohesion and bolstering the economic and social modernization of the country.

9. *All curriculum should be culturally & locally appropriate for ethnic education, national unity and educational development*
10. *Standards of reading and writing in ethnic languages and in Myanmar should be upgraded through in-service education for teachers on multi-lingual, child-centred methods, especially in the early grades.*
11. *Moves to recognize school curriculum developed by ethnic groups with necessary support to ensure equal standards in teaching and materials are an urgent priority*
12. *A Mon State Ethnic Education Committee shall be created, attached to the Central Language school, and requested to provide on-going advice to the State government on ethnic education issues*
13. *Open language departments in universities, community colleges, expansion of the capabilities of vocational schools. Student Clubs and co-curricular activities supporting ethnic language promotion and cultural preservation should be supported by State Education and State Government*
14. *The Ministry of Education should produce graded textbooks in minority languages.*
15. *At government services, (especially in the areas of healthcare and the law) effective communication for members of ethnic minority groups should be guaranteed by providing interpreting and translation services and easy-to-understand official documents and by revising regulation and advocating for greater use of ethnic languages.*
16. *Public employment advertisements should mention bilingualism in an ethnic minority language in addition to the official language as an advantage and priority be given for certain posts (especially as teachers in government schools).*
17. *Research should be supported to document the distribution and proficiency in language in all townships and sub-townships of Mon State, and on attitudes and expectations around the areas of identity, ethnic language use and education*
18. *Government should explore with media, print and electronic, to promote wider use of ethnic languages for communication of key messages, especially public health, legal and education information and to support more learning opportunities to maintain culture of each ethnic group.*
19. *Partnerships with private sector, especially in developing children's literature, comics and other reading materials for children in ethnic languages.*



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