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3 September 2014

Mr. Marc Hayard

Manager

The Martine and Bertram Pohl-Foundation

Prot. No. 7066 Ygn/14

Reference: The Completion of a Kindergarten at Monhla Village, Myanmar

Dear Mr. Marc Hayard,

Peace and Joy to you!

I am glad to hear from Mrs. Angela Jacobi that your foundation has supported USD8,000 for the completion of the construction of a kindergarten school at my native village.

Monhla is my birthplace and naturally, I have a special love and concern for it, especially for the people and their children. There is a State High School at Monhla village. As there has never been a Kindergarten for the children in Monhla, there is a need to open a Kindergarten as a good foundation for the holistic development of the children. They are in need of support for the completion of this worthy project of a Kindergarten in the compound of the parish center. The Sisters, parish priest, and parents have organized and started the program in this unfinished building.

We have almost finished the construction. What we need to do now is the painting, flooring and some detail works. We also need some equipment, such as tables, chairs, mat, pictures, and other things for children. Your support brings joy and a better chance to the children, both Catholics and Buddhists from this village.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

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Charles Bo

Archbishop of Yangon

### **Description and Scale of the Project:**

During the first years of life the trajectory of a child's future begins to be set. This includes not only whether or not the child will survive, but also the child's eventual height, learning ability, willingness to trust people around him/her, self-esteem, and risk of disease later in life. Poverty, frequent illness, unsanitary and polluted environments, poor nutrition and violence steal a child's potential. Overburdened families may not have the information, time, or safe places to support the stimulating play and learning opportunities that are necessary for the children to learn and develop.

In Myanmar most of the preschool age children from poor families in rural areas cannot attend the formal ECCD education. The cost for attending primary school is not so high but they do not have the opportunity to attend the school due to the difficulties of their parents' economic situations and lack of knowledge as well as poor education infrastructures and facilities. Generally, they help their parents in the farms and they look after their young siblings when their parents are working. In the urban areas, most of the parents are business men/women and sometime both of the parents are government employees. So they have the responsibility to work the whole day. They do not have enough time to look after their children too. 80% of the parents from urban areas send their children to nursery and the teachers from the nursery look after the children from morning till evening except weekends. So Pre-school/Nursery takes the place of the essential role for the parents and the children.

Unfortunately, due to various factors, not every born child has the opportunity to experience such a beautiful childhood. 80% of the rural children in the country lost this right and opportunity. Children experience poverty with their minds and hearts. Material poverty – for example, starting the day without a nutritious meal or no rights to go to school at school age – hinders emotional capacity as well as bodily growth.

Physical growth is widely measured in health and nutrition programs, but this is not the case in Myanmar and psychosocial development receives even less attention. Yet, education department of Myanmar researches clearly illustrate that interventions, such as early childhood education, good family interaction, and play and learning opportunities promote psychosocial development and can reduce exposure to violence and discrimination. The researchers also revealed that investment in the early years makes economic sense, investment in early childhood program results in cost savings from remedial education, delinquency and rehabilitative care among other.

### **Overall Objective**

Each and every child has the right to live in a nurturing, caring and a safe environment that enables him/her to survive and be physically healthy, mentally alert, emotionally secure, socially competent and able to learn.

### **Our ECCD Principles & Strategic Objective**

Child right based education infrastructure and facilities support and the main purposes are:

- Young children are important in their own right and as a resource for the future;
- Young children are valued and their full development is possible only if they live in an environment which reflects and respects their individual identity, culture and heritage;
- Parents are primarily responsible for nurturing and supporting the development of their children and this role should be more highly valued by society;
- Central and local government, INGOs, NGOs and Church Based Organizations are duty bearer and have a duty, working in partnership with parents, to ensure that services and support are available for families, services that encourage children's cognitive, social, emotional and physical development, and meet parents' need to support themselves and to provide daycare for their children.

### **Mon Hla Village and Kindergarten:**

Mon Hla is a big village with nearly 850 households. 90% of the villagers are farmers and 10% are seasonal workers. Most of them are not rich, but simple and hard working. 150 out of 850 households are Catholics. There is a High School in Mon Hla village and the students from Mon Hla and nearby villages depend on this school. Although the village has the High School, the educational quality of the students from this area is not satisfactory and the dropout rate at middle and high school levels are high. The root causes are; the poverty of the parents, little encouragement of the parents for education, and lack of Kindergarten at the village. We observed that the students from Mon Hla and neighboring villages are directly enrolled to primary school without attending the Kindergarten. This becomes their tradition and the villagers are not aware of the importance of Early Childhood Education. After meeting with the village leaders, the Headmaster, parish priest, Sisters, teachers and parents, we agreed that we should have a Kindergarten and initiation of Early Childhood Education for the young generation from this village and surrounding villages.

There is a large St. Michael's Church compound to open a kindergarten at Mon Hla village. We also enjoy to see that Franciscan Sisters who will lead the holistic development of the young children in term of running preschool at Mon Hla village. In Mon Hla village, there are more than 60 preschool age children who are hungry for the early childhood education. According to the need and demand of the local community, it becomes the right time to construct a kindergarten to promote the rights of the children and to transform our people into mature, self-reliant, holistically developed local communities in solidarity with the needy through Early Childhood Education and Development strategy.

### **Construction Progress and Need**

With the support of the individual donors, we started the construction in October 2013. The size of the building is 32 ft. x 52 ft. and R.C type. The whole construction work is estimated Ks. 20,063,500 (USD21,120). With the support and generous donation of individual donors, we have finished constructing the main body, and only painting, flooring and some small detail works remain. Currently due to the lack of fund, we have stopped it for a while already. We will also need some fund for the interior decoration, water and sanitation and some equipment for the children. Through Mrs. Angela Jacobi, we are happy to hear the news of the support of "The Martine Bertram Pohl-Foundation." With your support of USD8,000, we are sure we will be able to complete it and will also be able to install the necessary equipments.


### **Plan for Sustainability**

Although we have not finished the construction yet, with the present condition we have started running our Kindergarten program in August 2014. Parish Management and Construction Committee of Mon Hla village take the full duty and responsibility for the maintenance and sustainability of the preschool infrastructures in long term and for the running of the Kindergarten. One Franciscan Sisters take charge of the program and for the time being 2 young teachers are working together with FMM sisters.

### **Members of Kindergarten Construction and Running Management Committee**

- Parish Priest
- Franciscan Sisters
- Teachers from Monhla village
- Parish elders

Coordinated and prepared by:



Fr. Noel Saw Naw Aye  
Project Coordinator