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ANNEX II

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the special measure in favour of the people of Myanmar for 2024

Action Document for Ethnic Areas Support for Education (EASE)

SPECIAL MEASURE

This document constitutes the annual work programme within the meaning of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, within the meaning of Article 23(4) of the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1 SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

1. Title OPSYS business reference Basic Act	Ethnic Areas Support for Education (EASE) OPSYS number: ACT-62320 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe)
2. Team Europe Initiative	No
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out in Myanmar.
4. Programming document	Special Measure in the absence of a MIP
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	N/A
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	Priority Area 2: Education (110)
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG 16- Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development SDG 1 – End poverty in all its forms everywhere SDG 4 – Ensure inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all SDG 5 – Gender equality SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities
8 a) DAC code(s)	11220 Primary Education (30%) 11120 Education facilities and training (20%) 11130 Teacher Training (20%) 11231 Basic Life skills for youth (10%) 11320 Upper Secondary Education (modified and includes data from 11322) (10%) 11330 Vocational training (10%)

8 b) Main Delivery Channel	20000 – Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society				
9. Targets	<input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance				
10. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective	
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Aid to environment @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Disaster Risk Reduction @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Nutrition @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective	
	Biological diversity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Climate change mitigation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Climate change adaptation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	11. Internal markers and Tags	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
		Digitalisation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
digital connectivity digital governance digital entrepreneurship digital skills/literacy digital services		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	/	
Connectivity @		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

	digital connectivity energy transport health education and research	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Migration @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Covid-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION				
12. Amounts concerned	Budget line(s) (article, item): 14.020131 South and East Asia Total estimated cost: EUR 25 000 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 25 000 000			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
13. Type of financing	Direct management through: - Grants - Procurement Indirect management with the entity(ies) to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.3.3.			

1.2 Summary of the Action

In the three years since the military coup in Myanmar on 1st February 2021, the Myanmar military have continued to use repression and violence to try to maintain their grip on the country. Civilians, especially women, youth and children have been disproportionately affected. Violence, including regular airstrikes on the population by the Myanmar military, has led to extensive internal displacement and migration, property destruction, explosive ordnance contamination and movement restriction. Particularly important is the situation of women activists, human rights defenders, that keep working under constant threat and distress for themselves and their families. Allegations of abuse and GBV in detention centres and in military operations continue to be raised.¹ This has resulted in an estimated third of Myanmar's population, comprising 18.6 million individuals, including 6 million children, currently requiring humanitarian assistance². The military takeover coming in the midst of COVID-19 during which schools were closed for more than two years has severely impacted education for millions of children, particularly children with disabilities and from ethnic groups.. Very few teachers who had abandoned their post as part of the Civil Disobedience Movement have returned, and security conditions have worsened, making it difficult to return to school.

Education provision in remote and conflict-affected areas of Myanmar is highly diversified, encompassing a wide range of institutions such as public schools, ethnic community schools, mixed schools, faith-based schools and monastic schools. These education systems bear the consequences of the ongoing civil war and are characterised at best by neglect and at worse by marginalisation. Efforts to integrate ethnic education students into the state systems have been stopped since the coup d'état and ethnic education systems must meet a demand that has grown with spreading of the conflict and withdrawal of state services from many areas. Ethnic and community schools have stepped up provision of basic and alternative education services to students in rural and remote areas of states and regions affected by conflict. These providers play a critical role in providing culturally relevant quality education to ethnic children as a key aspect of maintaining local governance service delivery during the current civil war. There is very limited data on the way these schools are able to include children with disabilities.

¹ Country Level Implementation Plan CLIP Myanmar

² Myanmar Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) 2024 published on 18th December 2023

The Action builds on the successes and learnings from previous and ongoing education support projects³ in conflict-affected areas, in particular Conflict Areas Support for Education to Learn ‘CASE2Learn’ project⁴. This Action has provided education to 401,216 children and youth, including 208,873 female and 192,343 male, in remote and conflict-affected ethnic areas across 11 states and regions of Myanmar. However, there are still more than 200,000 children who are out of school in the areas where RISE Network operates⁵.

In the absence of a MIP 2021-27 for Myanmar, this action is prepared as a Special Measure for adoption in 2024. The action complements and enhances the EU-supported ongoing “Quality Basic Education Pathways for Children (QBEP4Children)⁶ and VET programmes⁷. The action contributes to the realisation of EU’s Gender Action Plan III 2021-2025, in particular regarding the ‘Thematic area – Promoting economic and social rights and empowering girls and women’ and the Strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities (2021-2030). The action will strengthen and harmonise existing education services and target communities currently without education services, Internally Displaced Peoples’ (IDPs) camps and villages, and those where services are not meeting children’s learning and education needs. The action focus will be on basic education but it will also contribute to the identification and development of relevant education programmes that address the learning needs of older out-of-school children particularly girls and illiterate women and those with disabilities through non-formal education, vocational education and training, remedial education/accelerated learning, and women literacy clubs. In a context of conflict and fragility of education services in the ethnic areas, the action will provide financial and technical resources to contribute to sustainability and expansion of education services. These initiatives aim to improve the quality of education, and to build stronger alignment in curriculum and promotion of core competencies across systems provided by the ethnic education authorities and providers.

The **overall objective** (Impact) of this action is to contribute to continued and increased access to quality, inclusive and equality-focused education services in ethnic and conflict affected areas.

The **specific objectives (Outcomes)** of this action are to:

- i) Increased access to inclusive, quality education services and learning pathways⁸ in ethnic and conflict-affected areas⁹;
- ii) Strengthened teachers’ capacities to deliver these services and improve the availability and accessibility of context-responsive, equality-focused teaching and learning materials;
- iii) Strengthened ethnic education systems, improve community-level management and sector coordination, advocacy and monitoring;

The action is also aligned with the Joint Response Framework¹⁰ (JRF). Its specific objectives reflect the three main strategic objectives¹¹ of the JRF and will also be closely coordinated with other ethnic education programmes funded by other donors within the framework of the JRF. The action will ensure do-no-harm and conflict sensitive approaches, with conflict assessments undertaken before finalizing the design of interventions and activities, while a specific focus will be on ensuring an inclusive, and gender equality approach aiming at equity, strongly reflecting a right-based approach, focusing on the right to education. In light of the current circumstances in Myanmar, the action envisages

³ ECHO-funded Conflict Areas Support for Education (CASE) and INTPA-funded Conflict Areas Support for Education Plus (CASE+)

⁴ CASE2learn is being implemented by the INGO Adventist Development & Relief Agency (ADRA) Myanmar in partnership with 16 local ethnic education partner organizations that are part of the Rural Indigenous Sustainable Education Network (RISE).

⁵ These figures are based on data compiled by RISE Network, and are consistent with data compiled by other stakeholders. It is not possible to collect reliable and comprehensive data in areas experiencing ongoing armed conflict, therefore estimates based on available information, and validated with stakeholders need to be used.

⁶ NDICI ASIA/2023/ 442-208: Quality Basic Education Pathways for Children implementing by UNICEF.

⁷ NDICI-ASIA/2022/438-191: Strengthening Technical and Vocational Training and Non-formal education in Ethnic and Conflicted affected areas of Myanmar implementing by Save the Children and NDICI-ASIA/2022/438-092: SCORE - Skills for Community Resilience and Empowerment implementing by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation.

⁸ Learning pathways is meant to include outreach education services in remote areas; Non-formal Education, Vocational Education and Training, remedial education/accelerated learning, and women literacy clubs.

⁹ This programme will focus primarily on ethnic and conflict affected areas including displaced ethnic children, youth and women in the areas controlled by the State Administration Council (SAC) because of their extreme vulnerability. Indicatively these are identified as Kayin, Mon, Shan, Kachin, Chin, Kayah, Rakhine, Shan, Sagaing, Bago, Tanintharyi, Mandalay, but these areas may be revised or expanded in line with evolution of the conflict.

¹⁰ The guiding document prepared by education development partners in Myanmar to address the education needs following the 2021 military coup

¹¹ Myanmar Joint Response Framework Review – Final Report 17 January 2024

achieving the specific objectives of the action by capitalising on the differentiated expertise of implementing partners, with key parameters for their selection building on the strength of their partnerships, be this with the more advanced ethnic education providers, where systems strengthening will be prioritised, or with emerging or recently formed ethnic education systems, where capacity-building is needed in view of future consolidation, and finally to deliver education services to IDP children, youth and women in State Administration Council (SAC) controlled areas where a very limited number of implementing partners are granted access. The action will also ensure active coordination between education development partners and ethnic education stakeholders by delivering assignments, analysis, strategic advice, and demand-driven services in the ethnic education sector.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

General Context

Myanmar is a diverse country comprising more than a hundred different ethnic groups. The Bamar ethnic group constitute the majority and have historically held a predominant position in the government and military, while many ethnic minorities have faced discrimination, exclusion, and human rights abuses. Cultural values, traditions and social roles consistently discriminate against women across the diverse ethnic spectrum according to the latest UN Gender Inequality Index¹ (2019), Myanmar ranks 118 out of 162 countries.¹² This has also been true in education. Historically, from independence in 1948 onwards, the school curriculum was standardized and centrally determined by the government without regional or other special allowances. However, private and ethnic alternatives were tolerated until the 1960s, but were not part of the state narrative on education. After the 1962 coup, these alternatives were closed down and outlawed. Nationalism in Myanmar's education system, no longer serving an anti-colonial purpose, then had two main functions: to cement the ethnic Bamar culture and language as central to the nation's unity – a process referred to as 'Burmanisation' – and to help justify military rule, which has resulted in several long-standing civil wars with other ethnic groups¹³. In 2011, Myanmar initiated a process of political reform under the leadership of President Thein Sein. The democratic transition continued when power was transferred to an elected government led by Aung San Suu Kyi in 2016. However, in February 2021, the military seized control of the government, reversing the democratic transition and sparking protests, civil disobedience, and an armed resistance movement by the People's Defense Forces (PDFs)¹⁴ aside from the already existing resistance to the military Junta by Ethnic Resistance Organizations (EROs). Most EROs have opposed the military junta and have collaborated with the newly formed National Union Government (NUG)¹⁵. The ongoing conflict and resulting violence in Myanmar has severely impacted ten regions and states¹⁶, which make up two-thirds of the country. The situation remains highly unpredictable. Control of many local Township and education administrations has shifted from State Administration Council (SAC) to Ethnic Education Providers in former SAC schools in some ethnic areas. The number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) across the country has also surged to 2.7 million persons, including 2.4 million (49% children) newly displaced since the coup¹⁷.

¹² Country Level Implementation Plan CLIP Myanmar

¹³ Lall, M. (2020). 1 The state of Education, pre-reform. Project Muse.

https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/354/oa_monograph/chapter/2777592/pdf

¹⁴ The People's Defense Forces (PDFs) in Myanmar, formed in response to the 2021 military coup, have grown significantly in size and capability despite lacking heavy equipment and international support. Comprising PDFs, Local Defense Forces (LDFs), and People's Defense Teams (PDTs), these groups are (nominally) coordinated by the National Unity Government (NUG) and ethnic resistance organizations (EROs). As of October 2022, the PDFs have around 65,000 troops, most likely to grow following the announcement by the SAC of the military conscription law on 10 Feb 2024.

¹⁵ Eight out of 17 major ethnic resistance organizations (EROs) are politically or militarily cooperating with the National Unity Government (NUG) to oppose the junta. The Interim National Unity Government (NUG) of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar was constituted as the sole and legitimate government formed by the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH). It derives its authority from the people's mandate in the 2020 democratic election and discussions with the National Unity Consultative Council. The NUG is committed to implementing the political roadmap outlined in Part I of the Federal Democracy Charter in consultation with the National Unity Consultative Council, and is accountable to the CRPH.

¹⁶ Chin State, Magway/Sagaing regions, Kachin State, North Shan State, East Shan State, Southern Shan, Karinee State, Karen State, and Rakhine State, as of 11 March 2024

¹⁷ <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/106826> As of 19 Feb 2024, the total estimated # of IDPs within Myanmar is 2,726,500, including 2,420,300 IDP newly displaced post coup.

Following the coup, the EU and its member states along with like-minded countries and Development Partners decided to adhere to the principles of non-engagement with the de-facto authorities in Myanmar. Thus, all cooperation with the de facto authorities have been halted.

Overview of the education sector context

The current context, marked by a lack of contact with the state education system, makes it challenging to collect data and provide educational support to children who are out of school¹⁸. Data on children's education access is limited and with notable gaps, and not disaggregated (including on disability), especially for conflict-affected areas. Available data indicates a decline in enrolment (of those aged 6-22 years) from 69.2% in 2017 to 56.8% in 2023¹⁹. Access to education varies widely across locations, including between urban and rural areas, states and regions, and high and low conflict areas. Following the coup, it is estimated that around 28% of 6-17 year old children are out of school²⁰, a significant increase from the estimated 21% in 2017; out of these children, 46% are high school-aged, 56% belong to the poorest two quintiles, and 79% live in rural areas; high-conflict townships have a higher percentage of out-of-school children (38%, compared to only 17% in low-conflict townships²¹). The gender gap in terms of access is minor in primary and middle school but favours females in high school. The Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2024 says that teenage girls are dropping out at a higher rate than teenage boys in areas where the conflict is ongoing and in ethnic minority areas. Moreover, a significant number of officials and teachers associated with the de facto Ministry of Education (MoE) in Myanmar participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) to voice their opposition against the military coup. Reports from 2021 shows that women account for 7% of the deaths and 20% of those under detention.²² Consequently, around 30% of the teachers' contracts were terminated, leading to a severe weakening of the public education system's service delivery capacity²³.

The education sector in the country is complex due to its history of conflict. About one-third of the population of Myanmar speaks an ethnic language as their mother tongue. Furthermore, according to stakeholders of ethnic education, more than 30% of children in ethnic areas do not speak the Burmese/Myanmar language when starting school²⁴. The State education system is viewed as a tool for assimilation by non-Burmese populations, making it a sensitive area of governance. In addition, state services were neglected in many ethnic areas, for reasons ranging from lack of funding to lack of access because of ongoing conflict. Ethnic education providers have therefore developed a wide variety of own systems to respond to the demand with culturally relevant and mother-tongue-based education services. These providers have been offering education services for decades to fill gaps in government services due to limited financing and lack of access to some of the Ethnic Resistance Organizations (EROs) controlled areas. Children with disabilities face important difficulties to access education and, while data is limited, some evidence points to that about 45.4% of the children with disabilities aged 5–9 years and 31.4% of the children with disabilities aged 10–13 years have never attended school²⁵. Among the displaced population, access for children with disabilities is even more difficult, due to physical barriers, stigma, insecurity and poverty.

Myanmar's ethnic-based school systems vary in size, resources, funding, curriculum, delivery, and language of instruction, as well as governance structures. Under the National Education Sector Plan (NESP) 2016-21 the MoE under the NLD government had established as a key priority to “support and promote ethnic languages and cultures, including for primary-age ethnic children who speak different languages” along with four main priority areas: increasing teacher's salaries, recruitment of contract teachers (known as daily-wage teachers), school construction, and making education free and compulsory. Since the coup d'état and the consequent annulment of this policy, and at this point in time in the conflict as there has been a withdrawal of state services in many areas, many EROs have progressed towards developing autonomous state structures, in the face of skyrocketing demand due to displacement and withdrawal of state services.

¹⁸ Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan Myanmar, Humanitarian programme cycle 2024, Dec. 2023

¹⁹ Education in Myanmar: Where are we now? World Bank, May 2023

²⁰ In Myanmar, for the academic year 2019-2020, around 9.7 million learners were enrolled in basic education, including 300,000 in Monastic schools and 420,000 in schools managed by ethnic basic education providers. In 2018, prior to both the COVID-19 pandemic and the coup on February 1st, 2021, it was estimated that roughly 2.7 million children were already out of school across Myanmar

²¹ Education in Myanmar : where are we now? World Bank, May 2023

²² AAPP (Assistance Association for Political Prisoners) CLIP

²³ The State Administration Council (SAC) reported during a press conference in July 2021 that there were a total number of 271,072 teachers in public schools (SAC 2021a). This represents a 30% decline from the 389,241 teachers in the system in 2018-19.

²⁴ This information is contained in the JRF; it should be reminded that systematic and comprehensive data collection is not possible in conflict areas. Nonetheless, this information points to a real issue for ethnic learners that is confirmed by all ethnic education service providers.

²⁵ Department of Population; Ministry of Labour & Immigration and Population with technical assistance from UNFPA (2017). The 2014 Myanmar population and housing census: Thematic report on disability. Census Report Volume 4-K.

In most conflict-affected areas, community schools are opened, but SAC MoE schools are closed due to ongoing fighting. This has resulted in an uneven distribution of education services in most of the ethnic areas.

Following the coup, development partners discontinued their engagement with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and in March 2022, they developed a Joint Response Framework (JRF) for the education sector. The JRF covers a three-year period (2022-2025) and includes a sub-program for ethnic education. In terms of the institutional context for education in Myanmar, the way forward is not yet agreed at a sub-national nor national level and the political context is extremely complex with many different competing interests, even among those who oppose the military. The National Unity Government (NUG) is in favour of the establishment of a new federal system in Myanmar, and at the same time ethnic education providers also recognize the necessity of a federal education system. They hold diverse aspirations for the future. Those affiliated with EROs seek to establish an inclusive national federal education system that acknowledges their role in upholding the education rights of ethnic children by providing culturally and linguistically relevant educational programs. However, there are unresolved issues regarding the relationship between sub-national levels and the union level and currently no joint agreement on the structure of the federal system and therefore a federal education system.

At the same time, the de facto authorities have been enacting laws that adversely affect Ethnic Education Providers (EEPs)/ Ethnic Based Education Providers (EBEPs), including the amendment to the National Education Law (NEL) in October 2022²⁶ which mandates that the Burmese language be used in classrooms. This poses a significant challenge to effective learning and communication in multi-lingual ethnic regions, potentially leading to a decline in enrolment. In addition, the recent de-facto government's conscription law²⁷ is likely to increase the shortage of teachers as many are in the age-bands for this conscription.

2.2 Problem Analysis

Currently, there is limited information available on the availability and effectiveness of education services and the number of out-of-school children in ethnic areas. As per the surveyed townships for the Humanitarian Need Overview 2024, school closures and non-enrolment of children in schools are mainly due to armed conflict and military takeovers. The major reasons reported for school closures and/or children not accessing education are security concerns (55%), school closures on orders of authorities (45%), exposure to conflict (36%), and teacher shortages (36%)²⁸. According to the analysis conducted by the World Bank, school closures and economic hardship are the primary reasons for primary and middle school dropouts increasingly more affecting girls²⁹. **Educational inequality and exclusion are widespread in these areas.** Schools are often unavailable, limited in terms of education services, or inaccessible due to distance, terrain, security concerns, and access for children with disabilities. Furthermore, acceptability and relevance of public schools to ethnic groups are significant challenges in these areas. Due to the erosion of educational resources and the ongoing armed conflict that hinders access and participation in education services, the provision of non-state ethnic educational services in rural/remote and conflict-affected areas of Myanmar is increasingly critical in ensuring continuity in education service provision. Ethnic education providers have also indicated that in many areas, schools operating in a context of ongoing conflict must be small to evade SAC airstrikes, providing a bleak picture of the operational environment for many of them.

The current demand for education services provided by Ethnic Education Providers (EEPs) surpasses the available supply. With tensions and clashes increasing, more children have moved to rural/remote areas, leading to an increase in enrolment and the number of community schools³⁰ further intensifying the demand for teachers. The current crisis is also undergoing a shift, as evidenced by the displacement of over 1.35 million refugees, individuals in refugee-

²⁶ the amendment to the National Education Law (NEL) enacted on October 29, 2022, which excludes representatives of non-governmental ethnic groups, student unions and teacher unions from the National Education Commission and further diminishes diversity in education policy and shows an un-willingness to recognize ethnic education systems and to support teachers and students within those systems.

²⁷ SAC military conscription law (February 2024) would also force people to fight against the very resistance they are part of, with the 'Myanmar's People Military Service Law, enacted in 2010 but activated in February 2024, meaning that men ages 18 to 45 and women ages 18 to 35 can be drafted into the armed forces for two years. Also the professional men and women can be conscripted up to the ages of 45 and 35. In the case of a national emergency, the military service could be extended to a total of five years. The country's ruling junta is aiming to draft 60,000 new recruits a year, with 5,000 by the end of April.

²⁸ Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan Myanmar, Humanitarian programme cycle 2024, Dec. 2023

²⁹ Education in Myanmar: where are we now? World Bank, May 2023

³⁰ CASE2Learn Year 4 Narrative Report (June 2022- May 2023)

like situations³¹, and in addition to 2.7 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), of which 50% are women and girls, 49% are children fleeing growing conflict-affected areas³². This shift has resulted in a greater need for education in areas where existing provisions were already insufficient, or where there is no provision at all.

Ethnic education providers in Myanmar are **heterogeneous in terms of their size** (number of schools and number of children attending their services) **and capacity**, with some catering to all sub-sectors of education, while others limit their services to primary education only. These providers face several **common challenges**, including teacher availability, competencies and retention, **insufficient funding for stipends**, safety concerns, inaccessible infrastructure, including WASH facilities (for managing menstrual hygiene), and low remuneration for education personnel. Furthermore, the scarcity of community teachers in ethnic areas has become an increasingly daunting challenge, exacerbated by the significant learning loss and gap during the pandemic and the coup. Community teachers from ethnic education providers are also not recognized by the de-facto government, limiting their employment opportunities. Additionally, psycho-social support for teachers, students, and communities and the supply of teaching and learning materials in ethnic areas is inadequate. Ethnic minority groups have been facing significant obstacles in obtaining quality education for decades due to persistent **language barriers**. The result is that many children either drop out of school or never enrol in the first place, particularly affecting girls and children with disabilities.. While some community schools promote the use of mother tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE), there is no standardized approach.

There is a pronounced and detrimental **discontinuity** across ethnic education systems and with the wider public education system, which results in little or no cross-recognition of educational awards or routes into further learning. Prior to the coup initial steps and progress had been made in this area but these efforts have now been suspended and the dialogue has stalled. There is however ongoing work between ethnic education systems on the alignment of standards, aiming at agreements on equivalency standards to enhance the quality of ethnic education service and recognition of learning, allowing children transfer and continuity of education. The limited availability of non-formal education and Vocational Education and Training (VET) services is also contributing to the **absence of learning pathways** for students. A strong demand for VET exists among stakeholders, but the supply is inadequate.

The enhancement of the capacities of Ethnic Education Providers (EEPs) is therefore also crucial in facilitating their ability to participate in the development of a **federal education system**, given that ethnic education systems are considered a key component in advancing the broader objective of agreeing and establishing such a national education structure. In Myanmar's contested areas, governance arrangements are intricate due to prolonged conflict. Ethnic education providers need to reach a consensus on common curriculum and teacher competency frameworks as intrinsic parts of establishing a federal education model that incorporates the country's linguistic and cultural diversity and reverses the many years of exclusion of these ethnic groups addressing gender disparities within these education systems.. The National Unity Government (NUG) has proposed a federal education model that Ethnic Education Providers have cautiously welcomed. However it is unclear if this federal system envisaged by NUG will also recognise and incorporate the EEP's approach to learning, culture, and languages. While EEPs have also made a commitment to align their curriculum and teacher competencies with the federal education system when it emerges and is agreed, there is a risk of conflict among NUG and EEPs, for example when trying to arrive at a common mechanism for recognizing qualifications and agreeing curriculum framework.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action:

The main stakeholders in the Action are Ethnic Education Service Providers and community-based organisations, local ethnic education CSOs, and women's organisations involved in ethnic education.

Rural Indigenous Sustainable Education (RISE) Network is the largest membership-based organisation for Ethnic Education Service Providers and as such, represents a central stakeholder in the field of ethnic education as they convey the voice of the front-line service providers. RISE was established by a collective of Indigenous education-focused organizations, which work together and support their own communities in remote, often conflict-affected areas across Myanmar. Since 2019, the existing 16 Ethnic Education Providers which are part of the RISE Network, collectively served 401,216 children, youth and women in 3,820 schools staffed 20,663 teachers in remote and conflict-affected

³¹ <https://reporting.unhcr.org/operational/situations/myanmar-situation>

³² <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/106826> As of 19 Feb 2024, the total estimated # of IDPs within Myanmar is 2,726,500, including 2,420,300 IDP newly displaced post coup.

ethnic areas across 11 states and regions of Myanmar³³ under the CASE2Learn project³⁴. These partners and the RISE network are further supported by UNESCO's provision of capacity development for both pre-service and in-service teacher training programs since 2022 under UNESCO's Strengthening Teacher Education in Myanmar (STEM) project.

The action complements, and will be closely coordinated and possibly contribute to the Myanmar Education Consortium (MEC) which is a multi-donor pooled fund basic education programme with a \$57.6 million budget (June '21 – May '25) funded by USAID, DFAT, FCDO and Finland. The MEC strategy focuses on system strengthening and works bilaterally with selected established ethnic education systems (providing support for education service delivery, institutional strengthening, and advocacy).

With the de facto authorities no longer ensuring services in many conflict areas, Ethnic Resistance Organisations are the duty bearers for delivery of basic services to the populations in territories under their control and as such represent a critical stakeholder. The EROs have traditionally featured education departments which offered a policy framework for ethnic education systems, but since the coup d'état and the territorial gains of the last years, EROs have developed new governance structures based on territory under their responsibility beyond the interests of their ethnic group, in preparation for the creation of a federal state: thus, Interim Executive Councils were created in several areas. As of the time of writing, these IECs find themselves at different stages of consultation, drafting, adoption and implementation³⁵. They will play a key role in defining education policy in ethnic areas, and allocating resources for implementation.

Local stakeholders of ethnic education have relied on international partners (Donors, Development Partners, and International NGOs) for implementation, and as such international partners represent important stakeholders. With the emergence and consolidation of ethnic governance structures in the form of IECs, support to ethnic education is evolving towards a sector-based approach based on policies defined and owned by local stakeholders including the CSOs delivering the services and represented via the RISE Network, and will allow international stakeholders to engage in policy dialogue as basis for support.

As rights-holders: Vulnerable children including ethnic boys and girls in rural/remote conflict and post conflict affected areas, out of school children (OOSC), displaced children, children with disabilities, youth and women, local teachers/community teachers, women's groups or groups representing persons with disabilities, parents, local communities in remote villages, returning refugees, IDP camps and villages in all states and regions across the whole country are the final beneficiaries of the action.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The **overall objective** (Impact) of this action is to contribute to continued and increased access to quality, inclusive and equality-focused education services in ethnic and conflict affected areas.

The **specific objectives (Outcomes)** of this action are to:

- 1) Increased access to inclusive, quality education services and learning pathways³⁶ in ethnic and conflict-affected areas³⁷;
- 2) Strengthened teachers' capacities to deliver these services and improve the availability and accessibility of context-responsive, equality-focused teaching and learning materials;
- 3) Strengthened ethnic education systems, improve community-level management and sector coordination, advocacy and monitoring;

The **Outputs** to be delivered by this action contributing to **Specific Objective 1** are:

³³ Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Shan, Bago, Sagaing, Tanintharyi, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Daw

³⁴ CASE2Learn_Annual Narrative Report_June 2022- May 2023

³⁵ Although fully owned and led locally, this process has been supported by the international community, including the EU through the Joint Peace Facility.

³⁶ Learning pathways is meant to include outreach education services in remote areas; Non-formal Education, Vocational Education and Training, remedial education/accelerated learning, and women literacy clubs.

³⁷ This programme will focus primarily on ethnic and conflict affected areas including displaced ethnic children, youth and women in the areas controlled by the State Administration Council (SAC) because of their extreme vulnerability. Indicatively these are identified as Kayin, Mon, Shan, Kachin, Chin, Kayah, Rakhine, Shan, Sagaing, Bago, Tanintharyi, Mandalay, but these areas may be revised or expanded in line with evolution of the conflict.

- 1.1 Social material and physical barriers to accessing education are mitigated.
- 1.2 Enhanced availability of child-friendly, safe, protective, gender responsive and inclusive learning environments for vulnerable children, children with disabilities, youth and women.
- 1.3 Increased availability of learning pathways for vulnerable children, youth and women.

The **Outputs** to be delivered by this action contributing to **Specific Objective 2** are:

- 2.1 Enhanced capacities of educators³⁸ to deliver quality education to vulnerable children, youth and women, including those with disabilities.
- 2.2 Increased availability and use of context- responsive, gender-sensitive, equality-focused teaching and learning materials with increased alignment in curriculum and promotion of core competencies across systems.
- 2.3 Increased availability of teaching learning resources and services for improved learning pathways for vulnerable children, youth and women, including those with disabilities.

The **Outputs** to be delivered by this action contributing to **Specific Objective 3** are:

- 3.1 Strengthened coordination around context-specific, culturally relevant and inclusive education concerns.
- 3.2 Strengthened management, monitoring and quality assurance systems including data collection, which enable enhanced community ownership and accountability.
- 3.3 Strengthened strategic leadership skills of Ethnic Education leaders.
- 3.4 Suitable funding mechanisms developed for ethnic education systems.

3.2 Indicative Activities

Indicative activities relating to Output 1.1 may include:

- Provision of student kits, basic nutrition; etc.
- Conduct the Out of School Children, gender and disability inclusion analysis of community schools managed by ethnic education providers;
- Undertake early grade literacy and numeracy assessments at baseline, midline and end line;
- Undertake a needs assessment for non-formal education (NFE)/ Vocational Education and Training (VET)/ literacy, numeracy and life skills targeting older out of school children and women, including those with disabilities³⁹;

Indicative activities relating to Output 1.2 may include:

- Improve community education facilities (including gender-sensitive and disability-inclusive WASH facilities, hygiene kits, sports facilities);
- Provision of school equipment including ramps and handrails, assistive devices/learning facilities for with disabilities and educational supplies⁴⁰
- Provision of community libraries where relevant;

Indicative activities relating to Output 1.3 may include:

- Expansion of Education Services for communities without schools and schools with extension of grades;
- Provision of NFE, VET, remedial education/accelerated learning and education services;
- Support new partnerships/collaborations with local ethnic CSOs working with women's and youth groups to expand community outreach and education initiatives;
- Provision of small grant for priority projects, including assistance for OOSC and women to participate in appropriate education programs/learning pathways;

Indicative Activities relating to Output 2.1 may include:

- Capacity development to teachers, including on inclusive education and methodology;
- Provision of teacher stipends/compensation;
- Training of school head teachers/principals on education leadership and management, gender, disability inclusion and awareness, conflict-sensitivity and mainstreaming⁴¹;
- Support and empower Parent-teacher Associations/ School Management Committee (PTAs/SMCs) to effectively play their role in education management;

Indicative Activities relating to Output 2.2 may include:

³⁸ Teachers, Principals, School management committee member, Parent Teacher Association member, etc.

³⁹ Provision of women literacy club in the communities under NFE program

⁴⁰ Educational supplies such as schools stationaries including flipchart, crayons, world map, Myanmar map, etc.

⁴¹ Mainstreaming including child protection, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and preparedness, Mine Risk Education (MRE), Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)

- Provision of context-responsive, equality-focused learning resources with increased alignment in curriculum and enhanced based on ethnic education priorities;
- Distribution of accessible mother tongue-based (MTB) resources and quality teaching and learning materials;
- Updating of pre-service training manuals to achieve greater alignment with equivalent teaching standards;
- Reviewing and updating the existing teacher competency framework for ethnic education providers to enhance conflict sensitive education;

Indicative Activities relating to Output 2.3 may include:

- Provision of teaching learning materials for Non-Formal Education (NFE)⁴², and Vocational Education and Training (VET);
- Provision of remedial education/accelerated learning and education services;
- Expand access to online platforms and improve accessibility of online tools and systems;

Indicative Activities relating to Output 3.1 may include:

- Capacity development of ethnic education providers and communities to establish and facilitate an ethnic education coordination platform⁴³;
- Develop a joint advocacy strategy;
- Undertake research to support inclusive policy dialogue;

Indicative Activities relating to Output 3.2 may include :

- Capacity development of ethnic education providers for efficient monitoring, reporting on the implementation of education services⁴⁴ and data collection;
- Strengthen community participation, localisation and the promotion of education as a priority within communities
- Support to establish PTAs/SMCs in the communities where school services are established;

Indicative Activities relating to Output 3.3 may include:

- Provision of capacity development to ethnic education leaders on strategic leadership, joint policy analysis and development of common positions on key issues⁴⁵;
- Conduct regular fora to share information/lessons learnt, and develop actions to address priorities of the sector;

Indicative Activities relating to Output 3.4 include:

- Raising awareness and strengthen participation of communities in school financial management;
- Support communities to design and develop suitable funding mechanisms for ethnic education;
- Provision of seed grants to develop potential funding mechanisms ensuring equitable access for women-led initiatives.

3.3 Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

Control over abundant natural resources and weak governance are among the root causes of the conflict and most likely of the military coup. Few of the anticipated activities are likely to have significant environmental consequences, but this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Outcomes of the SEA screening (relevant for budget support and strategic-level interventions)

N/A

Outcomes of the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project)

The EIA (Environment Impact Assessment) screening classified the action as Category C (no need for further assessment).

Outcome of the CRA (Climate Risk Assessment) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project)

⁴² Including but not limited to community outreach education services, basic literacy and numeracy education, women literacy, etc.

⁴³ This coordination platform will allow ethnic education providers to share their strategies and lessons learned and have open dialogue on emerging concerns and issues, such as developing a common curriculum framework, alignment between ethnic curriculums, recognition of ethnic education services/systems and discussion and agreement on a federal education model among ethnic education providers.

⁴⁴ Education services including participation and recognition of learning achievements, quality assurance and contingency planning by Integrating CSE in education planning and service delivery along with training and guidance on teacher well-being and psychosocial support and socio- emotional learning

⁴⁵ Key issues such as common competency frameworks, teacher stipends, etc

The Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening concluded that this action is no or low risk (no need for further assessment)

By committing to provide context-responsive, equality-focused quality teaching and learning and improving safe and equitable access to learning with a particular focus on children who are not currently participating in any organised learning, the action foresees to provide the targeted communities as well as the educators with skills needed to respond to climate change and future crises effectively.

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per the OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as [G1]. This implies that gender is a significant objective. Gender equality will be promoted through attention at the activity level based on the possible community challenges, notably barriers to equal access to education opportunities for girls and boys due to the current context. In the area of gender, it is of particular importance to strengthen the synergies between education and protection. The action contributes to SDG 5 on gender equality and SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth. Women will benefit from the action and be critical actors in implementing all the outputs. Girls and women will be equitably targeted as programme beneficiaries. This also includes interventions to provide targeted assistance, teaching and learning resources, and operating training courses for educators to improve learning outcomes of children and adolescents that will equitably benefit the most marginalised girls and female trainees. The action contributes to the EU's Gender Action Plan (GAP) III.

Human Rights

The ongoing violent repression of the population following the military takeover of 1 February 2021 reinforces the importance of mainstreaming the promotion of Human Rights and demands for active Human Rights protection of categories at risk. The action will consider the status of the target groups and the concerns of the different ethnicities in the areas of intervention. This action will contribute to ensuring the children's right to education, protection and well-being for the most marginalised children in Myanmar who have been deprived of basic education due to prolonged conflicts. The whole set of activities is designed to ensure the participation of all children. The action also contributes to SDG 4, 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'.

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as [D1]. This implies that special attention to inclusion will be given in all objectives of this action, which foresees first and foremost the sensitisation of the education systems as well as families to the needs, rights and potential of children with disabilities and strengthening access of children with disabilities. In addition, the project will provide adapted school equipment where possible, including ramps, handrails, provision of assistive devices/learning materials and equipment facilities and provision of teaching and learning materials, including audio-visual materials and tool kits to support children with disabilities, training of educators on principles of inclusive education. The action also contributes to SDG 16 (promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development).

Reduction of inequalities

The action is labelled as a significant objective, I-1. The action will directly address reduction of inequality in access to education, experienced by people in ethnic areas. By tackling education and thus increasing the opportunities for livelihoods, the project will address income inequality and inequality in access to economic opportunities.

Democracy

Outcome 3 of the action will play an enabling force to strengthen the capacity of ethnic education providers/leaders on strategic leadership and advocacy skills for the democratic transition endeavour.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

Building on knowledge and experiences from the implementation of the ongoing projects CASE2LEARN - Conflict Area Support for Education 2 Learn project (ref: ACA/2019/407-351) and Education for Change: Education Assistance to Children in Rakhine State (ref: ACA/2018/395-544), a conflict-sensitive approach will be applied to the overall programme implementation. Given the crisis context in selected areas, the action will be implemented on the ground mainly through local CSOs respecting the human rights-based approach working principles of participation, non-discrimination, accountability and transparency. As the context varies significantly between different states/regions, a local-level conflict sensitivity/risks analysis will be done before engaging. A high degree of conflict sensitivity will be fundamental to the design and delivery of the action, including a specific focus on the needs related to linguistic and cultural diversity (for example, mother-tongue-based education in available languages). The action will also be implemented in line with the results and recommendations of the Conflict Analysis Screening finalised in December 2021 and carried out according to the CAS methodology for the MIP programming exercise.

Disaster Risk Reduction

With the escalating effects of climate change, Myanmar is increasingly susceptible to hazards of greater frequency and intensity, resulting in the potential displacement of populations. The country ranks 2nd out of 180 countries in the Global Climate Risk Index (2021, data for 2000 to 2019) and 18th out of 191 in the Index of Risk Management

(INFORM, Mid-2022), which identifies the risk of humanitarian crisis globally, including, scores 7.1 out of 10 under the DRR indicator and is categorized 'High' in the Risk Class. Given the extreme vulnerability to climate change of many ethnic groups, disaster risk reduction is a fundamental issue to tackle in school and in communities, with a context-specific understanding and localised solutions.

Other considerations if relevant

N.A

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
1 – External Environment	The political, conflict, natural disasters, and the security situation in the country do not allow for effective implementation of programmes	H	H	Human rights due diligence and conflict sensitivity protocols will be put in place. Close monitoring will be undertaken. A conflict /risks analysis will be undertaken to ensure a conflict sensitive approach in the detailed design and during the implementation. The delivery of support might require continued crisis declaration and flexible procedures. The activities should be communicated as supporting continuity of learning and childrens' right to education, greater inclusion of minorities and greater gender equality. Special attention will be paid to safety and security of women and girls and and other vulnerable populations when planning and implementing activities, including risks that greater visibility might bring. Additional or emergency protection measures will be considered.
1- External Environment	Women and girls are prevented from participating for a multitude of reasons, including cultural customs, prejudicial gender norms, inadequate legal frameworks and protection mechanisms, poor access to education. The same risk applies to people living with disabilities.	M	M	Organizations and networks of women and persons with disabilities will be among the groups consulted, thus strengthening their meaningful participation in decision-making processes, planning and access to opportunities.
1 – External Environment	Civil society and/or local actors cannot operate freely, either for security or other practical reasons, or do not have sufficient capacity to deliver and monitor.	H	H	EU and its Member States will engage with CSOs in line with the CSO Strategy. Partners will establish rules and protocols for engagement and duty of care of their staff and ensure capacity development.

	International partners are unable to access local areas so implementation and monitoring capacity is limited			Partners will have mitigation measures in place in case of failure to access.
3 - People and the organisation	Conflict dynamics generate setbacks in finding a common ground to re-engage into a process conducive to <i>federal education</i> and sustainability. Polarizations and fragmentation of national actors/stakeholders.	M	M	Trainings, technical support, capacity building, equipping Strategic Leadership Skills and systems support and development of soft skills will be combined; The capacity to engage in evidence-informed policymaking of stakeholders will be built; including use and collection of disaggregated data. Implementing partners will be carefully and transparently selected. Activities will support coordination and consensus-building.
3 - People and the organisation	Limited commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment, the human rights-based approach and persons with disabilities on the part of targeted entities and non-state actors.	M	M	The action will provide sufficient resources to work with targeted entities and ethnic education providers on the importance of gender mainstreaming, the human rights-based approach and the rights of person with disabilities. The action will include the gender analysis of ethnic education sector.
3 - People and the organisation	Education authorities at different levels of governance are unable to build alignment on standards in the curriculum and promote core competencies across systems, to the detriment of advancing on the establishment of a federal education structure.	M	M	The action will foster engagements and dialogues among the different levels of education governance and ethnic education providers to create trust and facilitate mutual learning through the exploration of similarities and differences. By sharing best practices and identifying common ground, they can collaborate to align their systems, potentially leading to establishing core competencies and frameworks in areas such as teacher competency, curriculum, student learning assessment and recognition. The action is also committed to being inclusive and adopting a conflict-sensitive approach to international assistance.
4 - Legality and regulatory aspects	Application of the Registration of Associations Law.	H	M	The EU Delegation will look into good practices to overcome security/safety, financial and logistic challenges based on a number of coping strategies which have been effectively adopted by civil society actors.
Lessons Learnt:				

Over the last four years of implementing the Conflict Area Support for Education to Learn (CASE2Learn) programme, an overall lesson is that the EU has demonstrated its principled stance in support of the people in all areas of Myanmar, and its commitment towards contributing to a peaceful, inclusive society for sustainable development in Myanmar. Through its mid-term evaluation of the CASE2Learn Project in March 2023, it learned that developing a structured/programmatic approach to capacity and organizational development of partners (beyond simply providing workshops and individual training in financial management), will better promote the sustainable long-term capacity of RISE as a network and its members.

Through the CASE2Learn action, the EU also now fosters the inclusion of different ethnic and minority groups in the process of federal nation-building following the coup, addresses inequalities in education provision and performance, models an effective conflict-sensitive approach to supporting the education sector, demonstrates that balanced support across and among a wide range of ethnic education providers is possible and necessary during this transition period towards an eventual education model where all provider's perspectives will need to be accommodated.

Moreover, the dialogue with ethnic education providers in the framework of the CASE2Learn has highlighted additional key aspects below:

1. Forming a relationship with ethnic education providers takes time, and trust is essential;
2. Recognise and respect their in-depth knowledge of local needs, expertise, social capital, bonds with communities, and outreach capacity;
3. Avoid competitive funding mechanisms which cause fragmentation among ethnic education providers and ensure a common approach to provide support to ethnic education providers;
4. Recognise those ethnic education providers with fewer capacities and support their willingness and efforts to work collaboratively and equitably;
5. Many local ethnic communities inevitably prioritise security over development in the current context, which can impact significantly the extent to which SAC and/or conflict-affected areas can be reached with education services;
6. EU visibility rules need to be carefully considered in a context where this might expose partners to higher risks or compromise their access to communities;

Another important lesson is that localisation is working; there is a significant increase in potential absorption capacity in local CSOs/non-state actors⁴⁶. This includes ethnic education providers, and partnerships are in place to grow this potential. Since the coup, the localisation agenda has taken on much more importance. Newly established and existing networks of local CSOs/non-state actors have demonstrated their potential during the last four years, and more donors are supporting these networks. Women's organisations are key actors given their long tradition of providing services to communities which were not covered by government services, and their work in the promotion of human and civil rights⁴⁷. With the ongoing capacity building of CSOs/non-state actors, the local absorption capacity is anticipated to grow, and therefore, new potential opportunities for support will materialise.

While CASE2Learn clearly contributes to increasing the beneficiary population's resilience to shocks and pressure and there is realistic expectation of the continuation of partner's dialogue platforms on ethnic education policy, the key challenge in the current context of conflict is to retain trained teachers and keep ethnic schools open, which will be difficult for beneficiaries without external financial support. Only a few communities would be in a position to support their own teachers and sustain access to the most marginalised children. And community-level sustainability plans have not been developed yet.

In addition, the technical and financial capacities of RISE organisations vary significantly and external support for most is still needed. It is therefore essential to also provide training to partners on fundraising and develop a fundraising strategy with different donors. The Conference on Ethnic Education of February 2024 was a milestone event in ethnic education. It was co-organised by the Myanmar Education Consortium (MEC), ADRA and RISE, and brought together more than 200 participants including ethnic education providers, representatives from the EROs and their governance structures, and some trusted members of the pro-democracy movement. This conference covered many of the key result areas in this Action document and was of vital importance in kick-starting cross-sector coordination among education service providers and developing a broadly agreed agenda on key education reforms needed. It also represented a critical opportunity to enhance coordination and cooperation between MEC and RISE, as two major stakeholders in delivery of ethnic education. In the longer term, organisational approaches need to achieve complementarity with a view to engaging in a policy dialogue around education with ethnic organisations and their governance structures.

⁴⁶ Based on the Lessons Learned and Recommendation from the 2023 Evaluation of LIFT (Livelihoods and Food Security) fund which the EU also supports

⁴⁷ Country Level Implementation Plan CLIP Myanmar

In the current context, the action will capitalise on previous experience to continue supporting education in ethnic areas with new and shifting conflict dynamics in coordination with other development partners, ensuring complementarities of interventions in the sector, including with Global Partnership for Education (GPE) programmes and with Education Cannot Wait (ECW) through ESRG (Education Sector Representative Group) and EESR (Ethnic Education for States and Regions) platforms. The action complements and enhances the EU-supported ongoing programmes “Quality Basic Education Pathways for Children (QBEP4Children) (NDICI ASIA/2023/442-208), Strengthening Technical and Vocational Training and Non-formal education in Ethnic and Conflicted affected areas (NDICI-ASIA/2022/438-191), and SCORE - Skills for Community Resilience and Empowerment (NDICI-ASIA/2022/438-092). The action operationalises the humanitarian-development nexus by directly building on and leveraging the relationships built through the EUR 1.01 million ECHO-funded CASE project (2016-2018). Education services that were supported by ECHO were continued through “EU Peace Support in Myanmar/Burma – PEACE III” (ACA/2017/039-980) (Case+) and “Strengthening Indigenous Provision of Education in Ethnic Areas of Myanmar “(ACA/2018/040-857) (Case2Learn).

With a focus on creating nexus opportunities, INTPA and ECHO will seek ways to create bridges for students involved in recently completed or ongoing education grants funded by DG ECHO in active conflict areas. which consist of providing teaching and learning materials, organizing catch-up classes, rehabilitating safe learning spaces on a small scale, and delivering emergency education support and safe spaces to children “on the move”.

3.5 The Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is that:

IF targeted assistance and services are provided to help remove social and materials barriers to education for vulnerable children, youth and women;

And **IF** the capacities of educators, School Management Committee (SMC) and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA) are further strengthened and the strategic leadership skills of ethnic education leaders are reinforced;

And **IF** context-responsive, equality-focused teaching and learning materials (TLMs) are available and accessible through a range of learning pathways;

And **IF** harmonization of ethnic education services is increased and there is progressive alignment in curriculum and the promotion of core competencies across systems through a networked approach along with improved community-level management, coordination and monitoring by ethnic education providers;

And **IF** ethnic education providers are supported to identify their needs, participate in system strengthening and enhancing delivery of contextually relevant, inclusive, gender and conflict sensitive ethnic education services to provide vulnerable children, youth and women including those with disabilities, with the education they need;

THEN, ethnic education systems will be more sustainable and resilient; will ensure an increased access to quality education; and there will be increased alignment in curriculum and promotion of core competencies across systems for future recognition providing children from ethnic and conflict affected areas with learning pathways through to the fulfilment of their educational promise.

Ethnic education providers have also shown their resilience in the face of local conflict dynamics, their ability to provide mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE), and their validity and significance in the eyes of the communities they serve. Additionally, they have the potential to contribute to the long-term rebuilding of social cohesion. Given the likelihood of a prolonged period before a comprehensive political settlement, it is therefore critical to continue supporting ethnic education providers.

Through this action, the EU will advocate for a child-centred, gender equality, conflict-sensitive, culturally/linguistically relevant, human rights-based approach to ethnic education, while promoting pluralism and social cohesion. The action will also provide much-needed policy advocacy support to ethnic education service providers to collectively engage in policy dialogue with local governance structures.

3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

This indicative logframe constitutes the basis for the monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the intervention.

On the basis of this logframe matrix, a more detailed logframe (or several) may be developed at contracting stage. In case baselines and targets are not available for the action, they should be informed for each indicator at signature of the contract(s) linked to this AD, or in the first progress report at the latest. New columns may be added to set intermediary targets (milestones) for the Output and Outcome indicators whenever it is relevant.

- At inception, the first progress report should include the complete logframe (e.g. including baselines/targets).
- Progress reports should provide an updated logframe with current values for each indicator.
- The final report should enclose the logframe with baseline and final values for each indicator.

The indicative logical framework matrix may evolve during the lifetime of the action depending on the different implementation modalities of this action.

The activities, the expected Outputs and related indicators, targets and baselines included in the logframe matrix may be updated during the implementation of the action, no amendment being required to the Financing Decision.

PROJECT MODALITY (3 levels of results / indicators / Source of Data / Assumptions - no activities)

Results	Results chain (@): Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (@): (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (values and years)	Targets ⁴⁸ (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	Contribute to continued and increased access to quality, inclusive and equality-focused education services in ethnic and conflict affected areas	<p>1.Total number of children, youth and women (cumulative) benefiting⁴⁹ from various education services in targeted geographical locations, disaggregated by sex, disability and region and learning services</p> <p>2. Percentage of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills (disaggregated by sex) SDG 4.6.1</p>	<p>1. 0</p> <p>2. 0</p>	<p>1. 200,000 (50% F)</p> <p>2. 60%</p>	<p>1. Baseline and end line reports, Final report</p> <p>2. Final report, Evaluation Report</p>	<i>Not applicable</i>
Outcome 1	Increased access to inclusive, quality education services and learning pathways ⁵⁰ in ethnic and conflict-affected areas ⁵¹	<p>1.1 Number of children enrolled in primary and secondary education services supported by this action disaggregated by sex,age, disability, status (displaced/refugee), education services and ethnicity (**GERF 2.36) ⁵²</p> <p>1.2 older out of school children (OOSC) and women enrolled in non-formal education, VET ⁵³and women literacy club (disaggregated by sex, age, disability and</p>	<p>1.1 0</p> <p>1.2 To be defined in inception phase</p>	<p>1.1 150,000 (50% F)</p> <p>1.2 To be defined in inception phase</p>	<p>1.1 Baseline and end line reports, reports collected by Implementing Partners</p> <p>1.2 Baseline and end line reports, reports collected by Implementing Partners</p>	<p>Transportation is available, accessible and travel is not impacted by ongoing conflict or natural weather events.</p> <p>Conflict does not prevent children and youth from accessing education services provided by the education service providers.</p> <p>Involvement of communities, families, caregivers, and children themselves is sustained and promoted.</p>

⁴⁸ Targets are currently indicative and will be reviewed during the detailed preparation of the intervention, and completed (if needed) once baselines are available at the beginning of its implementation. It is also considering the chances for expand the activities.

⁴⁹ ‘Benefiting’ is defined as children, youth and women enrolling in and completing at least one education year in any educational services supported by programme. Children, youth or women who enrol in multiple education services throughout the programme will be counted and reported once per education service, per year but counted only once for impact-level reporting, as this represents the total cumulative total number of children, youth or women benefitting from the programme.

⁵⁰ Learning pathways is meant to include outreach education services in remote areas; Non-formal Education, Vocational Education and Training, remedial education/accelerated learning, and women literacy clubs.

⁵¹ This programme will focus primarily on ethnic and conflict affected areas including displaced ethnic children, youth and women in the areas controlled by the State Administration Council (SAC) because of their extreme vulnerability. Indicatively these are identified as Kayin, Mon, Shan, Kachin, Chin, Kayah, Rakhine, Shan, Sagaing, Bago, Tanintharyi, Mandalay, but these areas may be revised or expanded in line with evolution of the conflict.

⁵² GERF 2.20 Number of migrants, refugees, and internally displaced people or individuals from host communities protected or assisted with EU support [NDICI- Global Europe][SP]†

⁵³ GERF 2.14 Number of people who have benefited from institution or workplace based VET/skills development interventions supported by the EU: (a) all VET/skills development, (b) only VET/skills development for digitalisation [NDICI- Global Europe][SP]‡

		Indigenous provider) reported by providers				
Outcome 2	Strengthened teachers' capacities to deliver these services and improve the availability and accessibility of context-responsive, equality-focused teaching and learning materials	<p>2.1 # and % of teachers disaggregated by sex,age, disability, status (displaced/refugee), and ethnicity that achieve satisfactory teacher competencies based on the agreed Teacher Competency Framework (TCF) supported by this action (SDG 4.c.3)</p> <p>2.2 Annual completion rate disaggregated by sex,age,disability, status (displaced/refugee), education services and ethnicity (SDG 4.1.2)</p> <p>2.3 # and ratio of female to male participants who have benefited from skills development in VET and/or non-formal education and women literacy clubs with support from this action (GAP)</p>	<p>2.1 0</p> <p>2.2 0</p> <p>2.3 0</p>	<p>2.1 20,000</p> <p>2.2 90%</p> <p>2.3 50%</p>	<p>2.1 Baseline and end line reports, reports collected by Implementing Partners</p> <p>2.2 Baseline and end line reports, reports collected by Implementing Partners</p> <p>2.3 Baseline and end line reports, reports collected by Implementing Partners</p>	<p>Local partners continue to have safe access to target communities and children, including outreach access in hard-to-reach areas.</p> <p>There is an uninterrupted supply of learning materials available</p> <p>Ethnic Education Providers from different ethnic areas in Myanmar are willing and mandated by their Education Departments to engage in policy dialogue and joint coordination.</p>
Outcome 3	Strengthened ethnic education systems, improve community-level management and sector coordination, advocacy and monitoring	<p>3.1 Out-of-school rate for children, youth and women in crisis and conflict-affected areas disaggregated by sex, age, disability, status (displaced/refugee), and ethnicity</p> <p>3.2 Early grade Literacy and Numeracy outcomes for children disaggregated by sex,</p>	<p>3.1 to be defined in inception phase</p> <p>3.2. to be defined</p>	<p>3.1 to be defined in inception phase</p> <p>3.2 to be defined in inception phase</p>	<p>3.1 Baseline and end line studies, reports</p> <p>3.2 Baseline and end line studies, learning assessment reports</p>	

		<p>age, disability, status (displaced/refugee), and ethnicity attending education services supported by this action</p> <p>3.3 # of education service providers/CSOs/NGOs/local partners who demonstrate increased capacity to manage and monitor education programmes and service delivery at the community level, and education coordination and advocacy at the sector level, disaggregated by type and locality</p>	<p>in inception phase</p> <p>3.3. to be defined in inception phase</p>	3.3 to be defined in inception phase	3.3. Training reports, Baseline and end line reports	
Output 1.1 relating to Outcome 1	1.1 Social,material and physical barriers to accessing education are mitigated	<p>1.1.1 Number of children, youth and women benefiting from targeted assistance by the action to promote access to learning in targeted areas disaggregated by sex, age, disability, status (displaced/refugee), and ethnicity attending education services</p> <p>1.1.2 # of community members, School management committee members, parents, teachers and caregivers who receive guidance on reducing barriers to education, through community consultations, disaggregated by sex and ethnicity</p>	<p>1.1.1 Zero</p> <p>1.1.2 Zero</p>	<p>1.1.1 200,000</p> <p>1.1.2 5000</p>	<p>1.1.1 Reports collected from implementing partners, distribution lists</p> <p>1.1.2 Reports collected from implementing partners,</p>	<p>Distribution plans are not disrupted by weather events or conflict.</p> <p>More stabilised economy and no significant increase in inflation rate.</p>

Output 1.2 relating to Outcome 1	1.2 Enhanced availability of child-friendly, safe, protective, gender responsive and inclusive learning environments for vulnerable children, children with disabilities, youth and women	1.2.1 # and % of community schools/ learning spaces/ centres disaggregated by ethnic education provider reaching agreed quality standards that support learning for children supported by this action	1.2.1 Zero	1.2.1 3500	1.2.1 Baseline and end line reports, reports collected by Implementing Partners	Conditions are favourable in un-served communities to set up and expand educational learning facilities and services.
		1.2.2. # and % of community schools/ learning spaces/ centres disaggregated by ethnic education provider with existence of child-friendly, accessible and accountable school mechanisms and systems to take action on reported cases of school related gender based violence	1.2.2 Zero	1.2.2 3500	1.2.2 Baseline and end line reports, reports collected by Implementing Partners	
Output 1.3 relating to Outcome 1	1.3 Increased availability of learning pathways for vulnerable children, youth and women	1.3.1 # of communities where receive the MTB-MLE services 1.3.2 # of beneficiaries accessing non-formal education, VET and women's literacy clubs disaggregated by sex, age and disability	1.3.1 Zero 1.3.2 Zero	1.3.1 to be defined in inception phase 1.3.2 to be defined in inception phase	1.3.1 Reports collected by Implementing Partners 1.3.2 Reports collected by Implementing Partners	Age and level appropriate non-formal pathways with teaching and learning materials are developed and available for use by children, youth and women.
Output 2.1 relating to Outcome 2	2.1 Enhanced capacities of educators ⁵⁴ to deliver quality education to vulnerable children, youth and women , including those with disabilities	2.1.1 # of educators (disaggregated by sex, disability, education services providers and ethnicity) who complete preservice teacher training programme to support children's education 2.2.2 # of educators (disaggregated by sex,	2.1.1Zero	2.1.1 to be defined in inception phase	2.1.1 Registration and completion data from the Teacher training programme	Educators are available and willing to attend the trainings.

⁵⁴ Teachers, Principals, School management committee member, Parent Teacher Association member, etc

		<p>disability, education service providers and ethnicity) receiving equitable stipends</p> <p>2.2.3 #of school leaders disaggregated by sex and indigenous provider trained in instructional leadership, education management, SEL, MHPSS and gender & disability inclusion supported by this action</p>	<p>2.1.2 Zero</p> <p>2.1.3 Zero</p>	<p>2.1.2 to be defined in inception phase</p> <p>2.1.3 to be defined in inception phase</p>	<p>2.1.2 Distribution reports collected by Implementing Partners</p> <p>2.1.3 Training and pre and post training test reports collected by Implementing Partners</p>	
Output 2.2 relating to Outcome 2	2.2 Increased availability and use of context-responsive, gender-sensitive and equality -focused teaching and learning materials with increased alignment in curriculum and promotion of core competencies across systems	<p>2.2.1.# of community schools which receive inclusive, culturally responsive, equality and human right-focused, Mother Tongue Based Learning resources and Teaching & Learning materials</p> <p>2.2.2 The status of harmonisation of the curriculum and teacher competencies across systems</p>	<p>2.2.1 Zero</p> <p>2.2.2 not aligned</p>	<p>2.2.1. to be defined in inception phase</p> <p>2.2.2. to be defined in inception phase</p>	<p>2.2.1 Reports collected by Implementing Partners</p> <p>2.2.1 Meeting reports</p>	<p>Appropriate context-specific, inclusive culturally responsive and equality and human rights-focused teaching and learning materials are available and relevant to their needs.</p> <p>Distribution plans are not disrupted by weather events or conflict.</p>
Output 2.3 relating to Outcome 2	2.3 Increased availability of teaching learning resources and services for improved learning pathways for vulnerable children, youth and women, including those with disabilities	2.3.1 # of target groups benefitting from NFE, VET, accelerated learning and education services provided with context specific, inclusive, culturally responsive, equality and human rights-focused learning materials (disaggregated by sex, age, disability, education service	2.3.1 Zero	2.3.1. to be defined in inception phase	2.3.1 Reports collected by Implementing Partners	More stabilised economy and no significant increase in inflation rate.

		providers, education services and ethnicity)				
Output 3.1 relating to Outcome 3	3.1 Strengthened coordination around context-specific, culturally relevant and inclusive education concerns	<p>3.1.1 Joint advocacy strategy developed and updated annually supported by this action</p> <p>3.2.2 # of engagements/ inclusive policy dialogue among education service providers.</p>	<p>3.1.1 Zero</p> <p>3.2.2 Zero</p>	<p>3.1.1. to be defined in inception phase</p> <p>3.2.2. to be defined in inception phase</p>	<p>3.1.1 Reports collected by Implementing Partners</p> <p>3.2.2 Policy documents, meeting reports</p>	<p>Community members, parents, caregivers, themselves are available and willing to develop the joint advocacy strategy and conduct the policy dialogue.</p> <p>Safe environments are available to conduct policy dialogue among education service providers.</p>
Output 3.2 relating to Outcome 3	3.2 Strengthened management, monitoring and quality assurance systems including data collection which enable enhanced community ownership and accountability	<p>3.2.1 # of education service providers who receive organisational development training annually and the quality standards improvements supported by this action.</p> <p>3.2.2 # of schools with Parent-Teacher Associations/School Management Committees/Groups operating with the support of this action</p> <p>3.2.3 # of community schools with monitoring and quality assessment arrangements that disaggregate data on enrolment, completion by sex, age, education services, and disability</p>	<p>3.2.1 Zero</p> <p>3.2.2 Zero</p> <p>3.2.3 Zero</p>	<p>3.2.1. to be defined in inception phase</p> <p>3.2.2. to be defined in inception phase</p> <p>3.2.3. to be defined in inception phase</p>	<p>3.2.1 Reports collected by Implementing Partners</p> <p>3.2.2 Reports collected by Implementing Partners</p> <p>3.2.3 Reports collected by Implementing Partners</p>	<p>The education providers and communities have shown a transparency and willingness to engage in strengthening their systems.</p>
Output 3.3 relating to Outcome 3	3.3 Strengthened strategic leadership skills of Ethnic Education leaders	3.3.1 # ethnic education leaders disaggregated by sex and	3.3.1 Zero	3.3.1. to be defined in	3.3.1 Training and capacity development reports including	Ethnic Education leaders are willing and available to attend the trainings.

		education providers trained in strategic leadership skills 3.3.2 # of learning events supported by this action	3.3.2 Zero	inception phase 3.3.2. to be defined in inception phase	pre and post testing 3.3.2 Policy documents, Meeting reports	
Output 3.4 relating to Outcome 3	3.4 Suitable funding mechanisms developed for ethnic education systems	3.4.1 # of communities which design and develop suitable funding mechanisms to support inclusive and accessible education	3.4.1 Zero	3.4.1. to be defined in inception phase	2.4.1 Reports collected by Implementing Partners	Community members, parents, caregivers, themselves are available and willing to develop suitable funding mechanisms

4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country.

4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 60 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3 Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures⁵⁵.

4.3.1 Direct Management (Grants)

Grants: (direct management)

(a) Purpose of the grant(s)

The grant(s) will contribute to achieve the overall objective (Impact) and specific objectives (outcomes) of this action as described in section 3, in line with the geographical and thematic area of expertise of the implementing partner, and in close coordination among all implementing partners; in particular those described in section 4.3.3 below.

(b) Type of applicants targeted

In order to be eligible for a grant, the applicant(s) must:

- be a legal person or natural persons;
- be a public or private non-profit-organisation and
- be a specific type of organisation such as a non-governmental organisation, public sector operator, local authority, international (inter-governmental) organisation as defined by Article 156 of the EU Financial Regulation;

(c) Justification of (a) direct grant(s)

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, grants may be awarded without a call for proposals to a non-governmental organisation, local authority, international (inter-governmental) organisation as defined by Article 156 of the EU Financial Regulation, selected using the following criteria

- Strong expertise in ethnic education services, including mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE);
- Previous experience with main stakeholders, including ethnic education service providers
- Strong expertise in technical and vocational training, non-formal education and access to employment opportunities for youth and women;
- Previous involvement (recipient of FSTP) and/or experience in managing Financial Support to Third Parties;
- Expertise in the field of context-responsive, conflict-sensitivity, gender equality, do-no harm and Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA);

⁵⁵ www.sanctionsmap.eu. Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

- Established Managerial, operational and logistical capacities to implement the action in the benefitting zone, including rural/remote conflict and post-conflict-affected areas with a particular focus on ethnic areas of Myanmar;

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because Myanmar is in a crisis situation referred to in Article 2(21) of the Financial Regulation at the date of the Financing Decision, and/or because of the nature of the action with regard to Article 27(3) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

The part of the action under the budgetary envelope reserved for grants may, partially or totally and including where an entity is designated for receiving a grant without a call for proposals, be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the criteria defined in section 4.3.3.

4.3.2 Direct Management (Procurement)

The objective and results of the procurement will contribute to the achievement of specific objectives 1, 2 and 3 as described in section 3.

The call(s) for tenders will target the contracting of services related to analytical research, data collection, monitoring, capacity-building and other services required for implementation of the action.

4.3.3 Indirect Management with an entrusted entity

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria

- Demonstrated experience in all levels of education services, including MTB-MLE in Myanmar;
- Demonstrated effective working experience with community schools/centres as well as in supporting community educators, communities and parents in learning activities;
- Demonstrated experience and ability to provide quality basic education services to conflict-affected populations through collaboration with CSOs in conflict-affected areas and ethnic areas;
- Demonstrated experience in conflict-sensitive and human rights-based development projects/programmes and in due diligence compliance;
- Established operational capacity in Myanmar, including a strong presence at the local level and continued ability to operate in Myanmar;
- Willingness to accept the EU's leading role in policy/political dialogue with all stakeholders, promote a Team Europe approach or a Nexus approach, and provide adequate visibility to the EU as per the EU visibility guidelines;

The implementation by this entity entails the contribution to the achievement of all the Objectives and corresponding Outputs as described in section 3, in line with the geographical and thematic area of expertise of the implementing partner, and in close coordination among all implementing partners; in particular those described in section 4.3.1 above.

4.3.4 Changes from indirect to direct management mode (and vice versa) due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)

In case of exception circumstances outside of the Commission's control the implementation modality described in section 4.3.3 could change from indirect management with an entrusted entity to direct management through grants using the following types of applicants.

(a) Purpose of the grant(s)

The grant(s) will contribute to achieve the overall objective (Impact) and specific objectives (outcomes) of this action as described in section 3 in line with the geographical and thematic area of expertise of the implementing partner, and in close coordination among all implementing partners.

(b) Type of applicants targeted

In order to be eligible for a grant, the applicant(s) must:

- be a legal person or natural persons;

- be a public or private non-profit-organisation and
- be a specific type of organisation such as a non-governmental organisation, public sector operator, local authority, international (inter-governmental) organisation as defined by Article 156 of the EU Financial Regulation;

(c) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to a non-governmental organisation, local authority, international (inter-governmental) organisation as defined by Article 156 of the EU Financial Regulation, selected using the following criteria

- Strong expertise in ethnic education services, including mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE);
- Previous experience with main stakeholders, including ethnic education service providers in the field
- Strong expertise in technical and vocational training, non-formal education and access to employment opportunities for youth and women;
- Previous involvement (recipient of FSTP) and/or experience in managing Financial Support to Third Parties;
- Expertise in the field of context-responsive, conflict-sensitivity, gender equality, do-no harm and Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA);
- Established managerial, operational and logistical capacities to implement the action in the benefitting zone, including rural/remote conflict and post-conflict-affected areas with a particular focus on ethnic areas of Myanmar;

In case it should not prove possible to work in direct management with grants as specified in 4.3.1, due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control, that part of this action may be implemented in indirect management. This part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- Demonstrated experience in all levels of education services, including MTB-MLE in Myanmar;
- Demonstrated effective working experience with community schools/centres as well as in supporting community educators, communities and parents in learning activities;
- Demonstrated experience and ability to provide quality basic education services to conflict-affected populations through collaboration with CSOs in conflict-affected areas and ethnic areas;
- Demonstrated experience in conflict-sensitive and human rights-based development projects/programmes and in due diligence compliance;
- Established operational capacity in Myanmar, including a strong presence at the local level and continued ability to operate in Myanmar;
- Willingness to accept the EU's leading role in policy/political dialogue with all stakeholders, promote a Team Europe approach or a Nexus approach, and provide adequate visibility to the EU as per the EU visibility guidelines;

The implementation by this entity entails the contribution to the achievement of the Objectives and corresponding Outputs as outlined in section 3.1, in line with the geographical and thematic area of expertise of the implementing partner, and in close coordination among all implementing partners.

4.4 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply subject to the following provisions.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realization of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.5 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Implementation modalities – cf. section 4.3	
Overall Objective: “to contribute to continued and increased access to quality, inclusive and equality-focused education services in ethnic and conflict affected areas”, composed of:	25 000 000
Grants (direct management) – cf. section 4.3.1	18 000 000
Procurement (direct management) – cf. section 4.3.2	1 000 000
Indirect management with an entrusted entity- cf. section 4.3.3	6 000 000
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2 Audit – cf. section 5.3	will be covered by another Decision
Totals	25 000 000

4.6 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

A Steering Committee will govern this action. The Steering Committee will provide strategic guidance on implementation, including standard reporting and coordination between implementing partners, and ensure overall coherence of implementation. The terms of reference for the Committee, including its responsibilities and tasks, will be established at the beginning of the implementation. The Committee will be organised by the implementing partners and will be co-chaired by the EU Delegation. Key beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders, including possible future donors supporting ethnic education may be invited to participate in specific committee meetings as needed.

The EU will closely coordinate with the governance structure put in place for the implementation of the JRF. This will ensure that the processes are in align and there is close collaboration with other initiatives that contribute to the implementation of the JRF. The broader aim is to align with the education sector coordination among development partners.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action and may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, for the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action and ensuring effective coordination.

5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1. Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner’s responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix (for project modality) and the partner’s strategy, policy or reform action plan list (for budget support).

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring:

- Baselines setting: data collection for setting/confirmation of baselines and targets will be conducted during the first six months of the action. The data collection and analysis will be under the responsibility of the implementing partner and their costs may be included in the budgets.
- Stakeholder participation: Community consultations will be undertaken as part of the action to ensure a context specific response. Communities' capacities to engage in education and in the continuous learning activities offered in the community schools/centres should also be reinforced, ensuring a continued monitoring.
- Monitoring and evaluation will be based on indicators that are disaggregated by sex and age. In order to monitor development and inequalities, data/indicators will be disaggregated even further, including disability, group, location/country/region, ethnic background, displacement/migratory status, etc., when applicable. Key stakeholders will be involved in the monitoring process.

5.2. Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, mid-term and final evaluations will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission

The mid-term evaluation will be carried out for problem solving and learning purposes, in particular with respect to provide recommendations towards ensuring project alignment with the JRF, which is expected to evolve over time, and, if conditions allow, move towards additional activities as outlined in section 3.1.

The final evaluation will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the extraordinary context of the coup and the sensitivity of ethnic education sector context.

Evaluations will rely on teams which include gender and human rights expertise, who will assess the progress made regarding gender equality, the gender and sex-disaggregated indicators and the relationsation of human rights, as well as the application of the HRBA and its working principles (applying all human rights for all, meaningful and inclusive participation and access to decision-making, non-discrimination and equality, accountability and rule of law for all, and transparency and access to information supported by disaggregated data).

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 20 days in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports may be shared with the partners and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, apply the necessary adjustments.

Evaluation services may be contracted under a framework contract.

The financing of the evaluation may be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.

5.3. Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle will adopt a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

In line with the 2022 “[Communicating and Raising EU Visibility: Guidance for External Actions](#)”, it will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union’s support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU member states.

However, action documents for specific sector programmes are in principle no longer required to include a provision for communication and visibility actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources will instead be consolidated in Cooperation Facilities established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.