

# Zomi Education Working Group

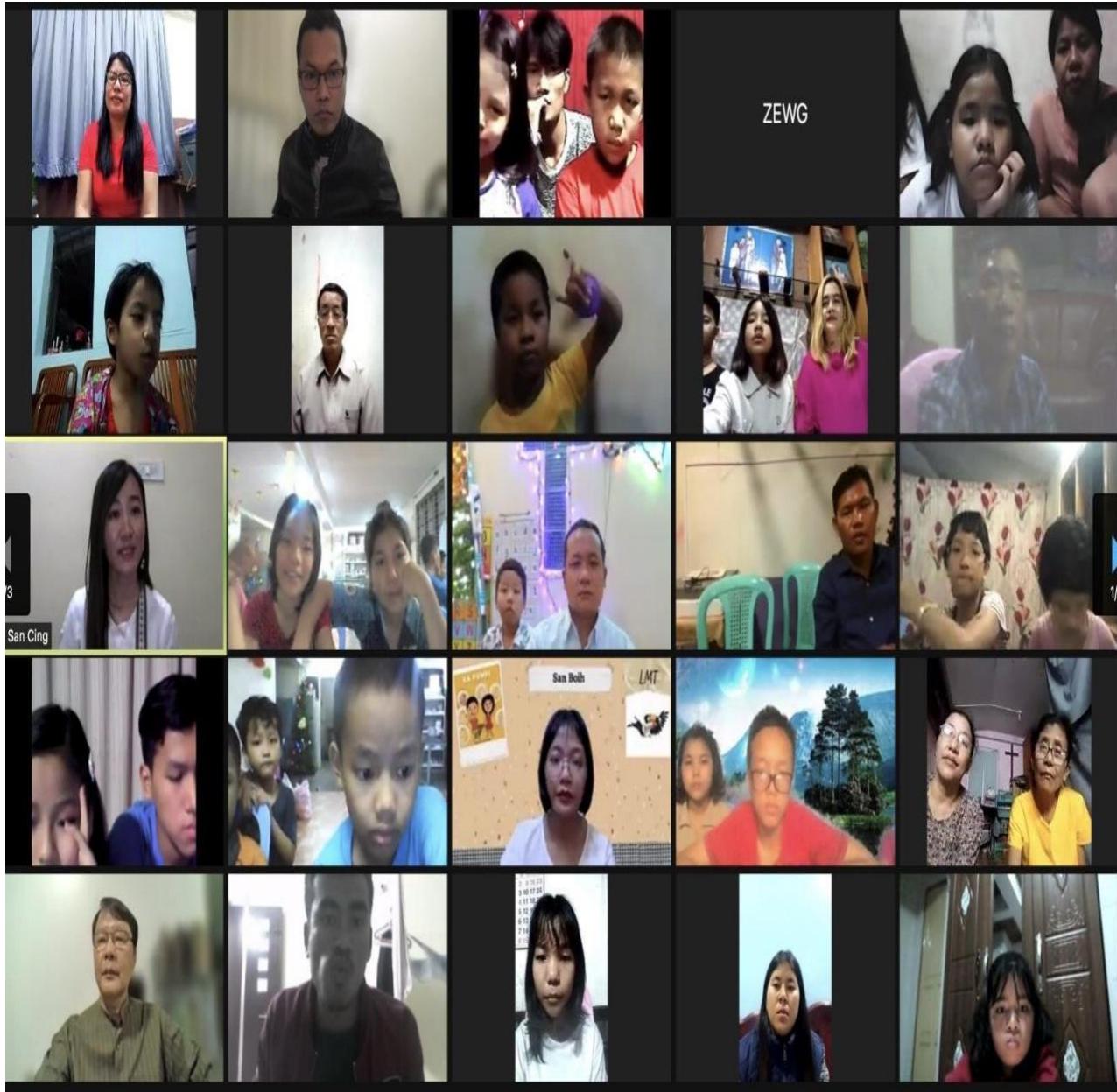
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## Annual Report of the Zomi Education Working Group

1 June 2021 to 31 May 2022



*New Year Celebration with Students, Parents, Teachers, and Special Guests*

## **Executive Summary**

The Zomi Education Working Group (ZEWG) is a grassroots organization composed of teacher representatives from Tedim, Tonzang, Tamu, and Kale Townships in Myanmar. The organization has emerged to facilitate the development of a Zomi education system and to create learning opportunities for Zomi Children in the middle of covid-19 pandemic and political unrest. From 1 June 2021 to 31 May 2022, the organization has carried out video contents creation, light board studio construction, and flipped virtual teachings. It also is developing a reduced and contextualized curriculum for conflict-affected areas and running a *Khalsang\_2022*, learning opportunities for post-secondary youths, under its Continuing Learning Program (CLP). Moreover, the organization has helped Home-Based Learning (HBL) materials distribution from UNICEF, and financially supported one refugee learning center in India and one community learning center in Tonzang, Chin State, Myanmar. This report includes details of ZEWG's history, structure, activities, and budget from 1 June 2021 to 31 May 2022.

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## **1. Introduction**

The Zomi in Myanmar are an indigenous ethnic inhabiting the Northern Chin State (Tedim and Tonzang Townships) and in the Kabaw Valley (Kale and Tamu Townships) of Sagaing Region. According to the General Administration Department in 2019, the Zomi population was around 200,000 in the whole of Myanmar where about half of them were in Chin State and more than 32% of the population were in Kale and Tamu Townships. Among the Zomi, about 46,000 (23% of the population) was under 18 years old (or schooling ages).

Since March 2020, children could not access formal school classes due to the Covid-19 pandemic and political crisis. According to data from the Chin State Education Office, there were 1,663 teachers in Tedim township and 670 teachers in Tonzang township. However, the 2021 coup led many teachers to join the civil disobedience movement, and reports indicated that not less than 1,097 (67%) in Tedim township and 283 (42.2%) teachers in Tonzang township have been removed from their positions. It was estimated that a similar proportion, about half of the total schoolteachers, would also be fired from their positions in Kale and Tamu Townships. In June 2021, the junta tried to (re-)open schools, but media reports and ground information suggested that many students and teachers did school-strikes. The situation becomes worse, and it is difficult to predict when the pandemic and/or political crisis will be over. This means the educational and further learning opportunities for children are uncertain.

In order to create educational pathways for children in the unpredictable future, the Zomi Education Working Group (ZEWG) was formed through an initial discussion with Zomi schoolteachers from all over the country on 3 June 2021. This report includes first the history and activities of ZEWG, achievements and challenges during this one year, and appreciations of our donors from 5 June 2021 to 31 May 2022.

### **1. Background of the Zomi Education Working Group (ZEWG)**

Zomi Education Working Group (ZEWG) is a grassroots and non-profit organization of Zomi educators. It was formed on 5 June 2021 with teacher representatives from Tedim, Tonzang, Tamu and Kale Townships. The vision and missions of forming ZEWG are:

#### ***1.1. Vision***

- To develop an accessible and high-quality education system for the Zomi.

### ***1.2.Mission***

- To create educational pathways for students who cannot access formal school classes due to the Covid-19 pandemic and political unrest.
- To preserve the Zomi language, culture, history, and literature.
- To facilitate the development of a high-quality and sustainable education system for the Zomi.

### ***1.3.Structure***

Meanwhile, ZEWG has three departments: management team, curriculum and teaching team, and finance & accountant team. The management team is led by Mr. Peter Suante (Ph.D. candidate, The University of Hong Kong), Dr. Singpi (M.B.B.S., Mandalay), and Miss San Cing (a former middle school principal, M.A. in English). Two of the representatives are selected to be the finance & accountant team (Ms. Niang S. Kim & Ms. Khawmnu). The remaining representatives are grouped into the curriculum and teaching team. The primary school curriculum and teaching team is led by Mr. Khai S. Cin (Dip. Ed.), the middle school is led by Ms. Gin L. Cing (DTED), and the high school is led by Mr. Suan S. Kap (B.Ed.).

ZEWG employs collective leadership. Management team members coordinate fund raisings, international and inter-organizational relationships, and ZEWG meetings. The three curriculum and teaching team leaders arrange classes, draw timetables, provide technical support to teachers, and organize students. The finance & accountant team members manage ways to accept funds, record teachers' teaching periods, and make payments to teachers. Any program planning is done with an agreement among the management team members, the three curriculum and teaching team leaders, and the two finance & accountant team members.

### ***1.4.Parent Committee***

On December 12, 2021, 47 persons attended the ZEWG parents-teachers meeting. The attendees voted for whether to form a Parent committee or a Parent-Teacher committee, and 54% voted for a Parent Committee which will have more authority and somehow independence from the teachers' influence. Then, the attendees selected their 12 Parent-Committee members as President 1 & 2, Secretary 1 & 2, Treasurers 1 & 2, and five members. The purpose of founding a Parent Committee was to have ideological and substantial inputs from parents in the present and future Zomi educational activities. For now, the role of the parent committee is not fully exercised yet despite their strong support in the ZOEd\_2021 program. In the long run, ZEWG aims to provide the parent

committee an equal voting power with the management team, the curriculum and teaching team, and the finance team.

## **2. Programs**

From 5 June 2021 to 31 May 2022, ZEWG has launched three main programs such as video content creation and the ZOEd\_LB1, ZOEd\_2021, and Khalsang\_2022. Moreover, ZEWG had financially supported one refugee learning center in Champhai Town, Mizoram State in India, and one community learning center in Tonzang Township, Chin State in Myanmar. It also helped with the distribution of Home-Based Learning (HBL) materials from UNICEF and KMSS-Kale.

### ***2.1. Creation of Video Contents and the ZOEd\_LB1***

First and foremost, since children could not have access to formal classes for more than a year, ZEWG's priority was to create learning opportunities. ZEWG team members therefore considered creating and delivering teaching video contents, so that children could continue learning in their own home. The newly developed Myanmar national curriculum was also challenging for parents and private tutors, and a few people could arrange to teach and learn in their own ways. ZEWG, therefore, tried creating teaching video contents and uploaded it on our Facebook page and YouTube Channel. In order to create quality videos and explanations of complex mathematical equations, ZEWG then proposed to develop lightboard studios in Kale and Tedim Townships. However, due to the financial constraint and an emphasis on other programs in July, only a studio in Kale Town was implemented. The studio was in a parent's house. The house owner does not charge yet for the studio room. The setting costed 384,400 MMK (~US\$ 208)<sup>1</sup> which did not cover yet the fees for the workforce, a video camera, an editing software, and a computer.

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<sup>1</sup> US\$ 1 = 1850 MMK

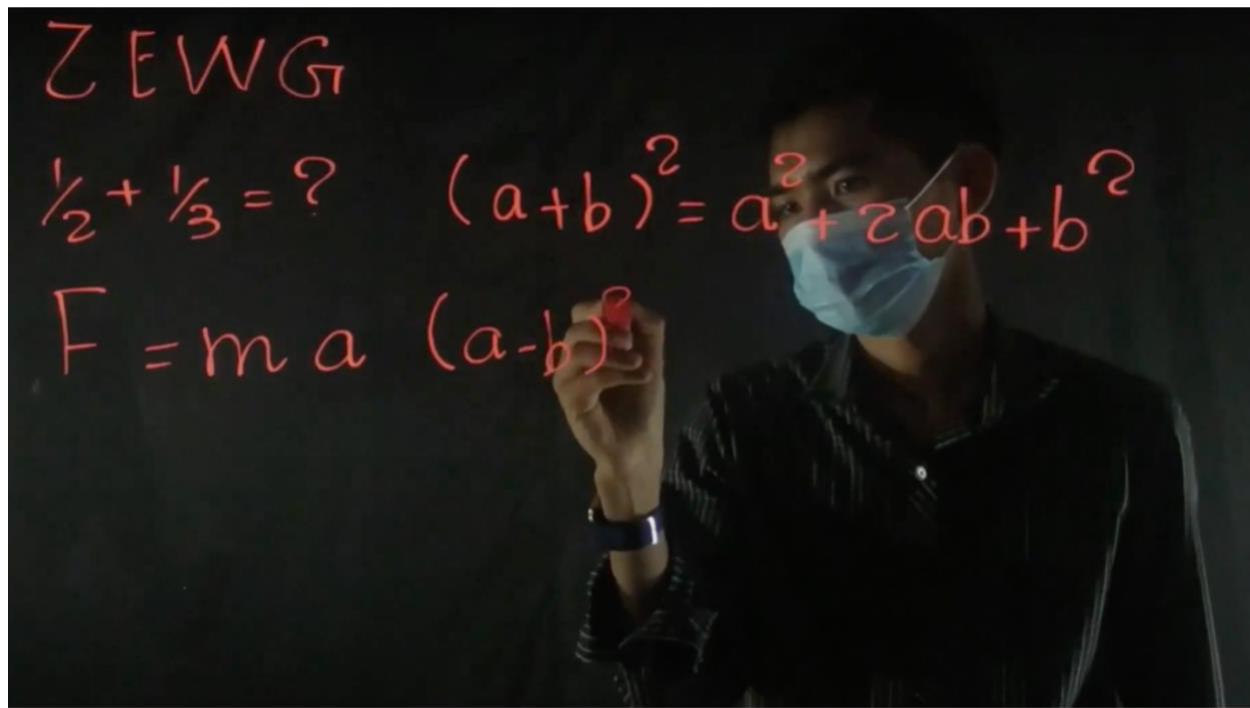


Figure 1. Testing of the Lightboard Studio by the High School Curriculum and Teaching Team Leader

The initial aim was to deliver teaching video contents of all subjects in the new curriculum to villages through different means – i.e., memory stick, CD, or other hard disks – and to make teaching contents of those always available online. The teaching videos used Zomi language as the medium of instruction so that the Zomi children could understand easily and do home-based learning. However, when the ZEWG members emphasized the ZOEd\_2021 program for a more interactive classroom from mid-July, the video content creation was postponed. In total, only 15 teaching videos of Grade 10 English had been created and uploaded on our channels.

## 2.2. ZOEd\_2021

From the first meeting on June 5, 2021, ZEWG members agreed that they could not afford students to lose learning opportunities for more than two years. Therefore, in line with their missions, ZEWG members sought ways to operate a form of community schools in Zomi villages in Tedim, Tonzang, Tamu, and Kale Townships. However, due to the pandemic and political unrest, having physical classes was very unlikely in 2021. ZEWG members then needed to consider the possibility of online teaching and learning services. Nevertheless, they could not fully rely on online teaching since the internet connection was unstable. Those factors made ZEWG adopt a form of a blended learning system.

ZEWG termed its blended learning program the “Zomi Online Education-2021 or ZOEd\_2021”. This ZOEd\_2021 was a form of both online and offline learning systems. First, teachers organized students of the same grade into private social media groups such as Facebook and/or Viber (as school classes). Teachers then created video lessons and uploaded them to those private social media group(s) at least one day ahead of Zoom meetings. Students needed to listen and learn those video lessons and did homework (if there was) before Zoom meetings. Then, through Zoom meetings, students and teachers had a discussion and Q&A sections regarding the uploaded video lessons. The rationale for letting students learn video lessons ahead of Zoom meetings aimed to solve problems related to unstable internet connections and to reduce costs for extensive Zoom teaching hours. In each Zoom meeting, teachers assessed and graded students on two factors: “participation in the class” and “understanding levels of the uploaded video lessons”. Those teachers’ assessments were used as records for children’s further educational opportunities.

The program included teachings of Myanmar, English, Zolai (Zomi language & literature), Mathematics, Life-skills (hygiene and health education), and Civic Education by using the Zomi language as the medium of instruction for Grades 1-4 and Grade 6-11. Those subjects were based on the national curriculum of Myanmar, but we added Headway textbooks for English grammar, speaking, and listening. We also could not get life skills (hygiene and health education) text for the high school level from the Myanmar curriculum. So, for life-skills in Grades 10 and 11, we followed guidelines from both the North Shore Disability Resource Centre (NSDRC) and the American India Foundation (AIF). The ZOEd\_2021: Batch-1 commenced on September 1, 2021, and its Batch-2 was on September 16, 2021. The program was officially closed on March 31, 2022, but some classes continued till mid-April due to their curriculum schedules.

The total registered numbers for the ZOEd\_2021 was 803 students, but only 755 (54.3% were females) students were in class groups (as shown in Table 1). There was no geographical restriction for it; so, besides our representative four townships, our students included children from Lashio, Tachilek, and Yangon. Since the evening of September 24, 2021, the Internet was cut off in Chin State, except Hakha Town. More than half (53%) of our teachers and students could no longer access both our video lessons and Zoom classes. Then, we needed to combine the previous two classes per grade into one, and the number of students in the combined classes became 355. Then in early January 2022, the Junta raised the Telecommunication Fees and Internet Taxes, and data fees were doubled. Consequently, about half of our students could no longer join our video

lessons and Zoom classes, and the number of students in classes dropped to around 200. At the end of the program, 148 children (53.4% were females) from different grades remained in the ZOEd\_2021 teaching.

Table 1. Number of students in ZOEd-2021

	Students in class-groups		Students in the end of the program	
	Female	Total	Female	Total
Grade 1	43	82	8	19
Grade 2	44	83	6	12
Grade 3	30	59	12	20
Grade 4	31	60	7	16
Grade 6	34	78	8	16
Grade 7	41	79	10	20
Grade 8	48	76	9	14
Grade 9	28	56	6	10
Grade 10	56	88	7	12
Grade 11	55	94	6	9
Total	410	755	79	148

Teaching was carried out by our 44 teaching volunteers (29 females), but some could not continue after the Junta was cut off from the Internet in Chin State. Teaching volunteers received one day of orientation and further individual instructions regarding the training of Zoom settings and video content creations. Teaching volunteers were paid 3,000 kyats (~ US\$1.22) per period (one video lesson plus about 40 minutes of Zoom discussion with children) as compensation for their Internet data cost. During this one year, the ZEWG teaching team had organized **3,801 flipped virtual classes** with the cost of 11,402,000 MMK (~ US\$ 6,163.2) (see Appendix D). In addition, the ZEWG spent 274,300 MMK (~ US\$ 150) for communication, stationeries, management, and team meetings. The team tried hard to minimize the operational costs.

### **2.3. Curriculum Development**

As described above, Chin State is one of the least developed regions in Myanmar which already has many limitations while the pandemic and political unrest has been worsening the situation in the state. People in Chin State suffer severely from conflicts and economic recession. They are left in the dark without having access to the internet and limited mobile communication network. Their children could not have online learning opportunities as in neighboring cities (e.g., Kale in Sagaing Region).

Regardless of those challenges, ZEWG has learned that many youths and villagers in the Tedim and Tonzang townships sought and created different learning opportunities for their children. However, when organizing community-based teaching or learning centers, there were three main issues related to using the national curriculum. First, the junta forces likely consider the teaching as a form of resistance (alternative governance) against their ruling, and that likely put not only teachers and students but also all the villagers and organizers at a high risk of being arrested, tortured, and killed. Second, due to the lack of human resources and the small number of students, most villages could not provide teaching for every grade, or they needed to combine students from different grades. However, when they combined grades, students' level of knowledge became a challenge in teaching. For instance, villagers reported to ZEWG that if they needed to teach children who had learned Grade 4 and who had not learned it together, the Grade 4 curriculum became easy for children who had learned, and they became bored easily. Children who had not learned the curriculum had difficulty following their classmates who had learned the curriculum. Third, even for online teaching, children from the common families could not afford internet data fees for full-day classes; that means, with no proper electricity, their mobile/laptop batteries could not stand for hours of Zoom classes, and even if they have electricity, daily data fees would exceed their family income.

For such reasons, villagers request ZEWG to help develop curricula for their contexts. They want to reduce the curriculum in order to be flexible with the unpredictable situation. Moreover, on October 3, 2021, ZEWG's management, finance, and curriculum and teaching members had a meeting with more than 90 parents, and parents requested us to include the teaching of subjects such as Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Social Sciences.

ZEWG is therefore developing curricula which have six levels for children in turbulent contexts. Table 1 shows the scheduled subjects, teaching hours, and level arrangements for nine months. The curriculum was reduced to almost half of formal lengths, and KG to Grade 11 (what Myanmar is having) is divided into six levels (combine two grades into one level).

Furthermore, ZEWG sees the situation also as an opportunity to develop a contextual curriculum and the Zomi language subject. Till today, the Myanmar curriculum is Burman-

centralized,<sup>2</sup> and the government does not allow the use of ethnic languages as the language of instruction and curriculum. In the past, ethnic languages were allowed to study just as an elective subject for up to Grade 5. ZEWG therefore aims to develop a Zo language curriculum for higher grades (levels 4-5) and deliver teaching with the Zomi language as the medium of instruction. In addition, ZEWG emphasizes “hygiene and health education” which includes knowledge of healthy diets, personal hygiene, and reproductive education. The selection of those subjects is highly related to their vulnerability context.

**Table 2. Scheduled Teaching Hours, Subjects and Curriculum Design**

Level	Est. ages			Period per day			Minutes per period		
1	5-6			3			40		
2	7-8			3			40		
3	9-10			3			40		
4	11-12			4			45		
5	13-14			4			45		
6	15-16			4			45		

Subject	Level 1			Level 2			Level 3			Level 4			Level 5			Level 6		
	per week	per month	per year	per week	per month	per year	per week	per month	per year	per week	per month	per year	per week	per month	per year	per week	per month	per year
Burmese	4	16	144	3	12	108	3	12	108	4	16	144	4	16	144	3	12	108
English	3	12	108	3	12	108	3	12	108	5	20	180	5	20	180	3	12	108
Math	3	12	108	4	16	144	4	16	144	5	20	180	5	20	180	4	16	144
Civics	1	4	36	1	4	36	1	4	36	1	4	36	1	4	36	1	4	36
Basic Science	2	8	72	2	8	72	2	8	72	2	8	72	2	8	72			
Zolai	2	8	72	2	8	72	2	8	72	1	4	36	1	4	36			
Hygiene and health education										2	8	72	2	8	72	1	4	36
Chemistry, History																3	12	108

<sup>2</sup> Rosalie Metro, “Center, Periphery, and Boundary in the New Myanmar Curriculum” (paper presented at *Myanmar Studies from Center, Periphery, and Boundary International Symposium*, Naypyitaw: Myanmar, September 16–17, 2019).

Physics/ Geography		3	12	108
Biology/ Economics		2	8	72

As shown in Table 2, a reduced and contextualized curriculum for a turbulent context is now in the process of development led by the curriculum and teaching team of ZEWG. The curriculum development team includes 17 members, and the first draft of it is scheduled to be available on 31 July 2022. Texts in civics and hygiene and health education will be in the Zomi language, other subjects will be in Burmese up to level 5, and in English at level 6. Despite the language used in the text, the contents of the curriculum will be made relevant to things, stories, and examples in the Zomi and Chin contexts. Beyond this curriculum for an emergency context, ZEWG will try to work out a contextualized and high-quality full-scale curriculum for the Zomi in the near future.

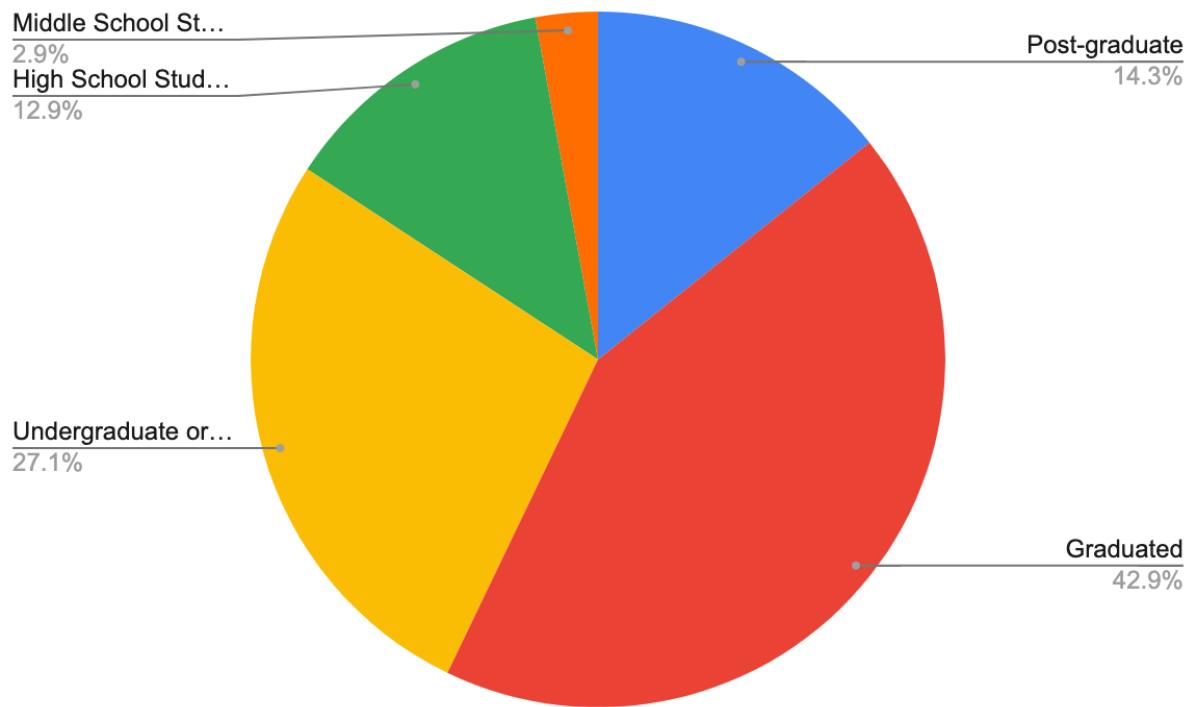
#### ***2.4.Khalsang\_2022***

Khalsang\_2022 was run by the Continuing Learning Program (CLP), a sister program of ZEWG. Since the beginning of ZEWG, facilitating the development of higher education programs has also been the dream of the team members. From one perspective, ZEWG's ZOEd\_LB1 and ZOEd\_2021 were mainly for basic education students. As such, a team led by Dr. Singpi (ZEWG's management team member) organized a modular program, called "Khalsang\_2022", in March 2022. The program would continuously organize courses based on the availability of resource persons and students. The program team was divided into the admission team, student affairs, technical support, and program management. Khalsang in Zomi means "summer school", and its purpose was to provide learning opportunities for post-secondary Zomi who could not continue their education due to the pandemic and political situations in Myanmar.

The Khalsang\_2022 includes seven courses: basic agricultural training, basic social research methods, theories of comparative politics, Zolai tonggualh (grammar), an introduction to cryptocurrency, an introduction to the Internet of Things (IoT), and a leadership course. Like ZOEd\_2021, the program used Zomi language as the medium of instruction and terms in daily contexts, so that students with low English skills could follow the courses. The formal rate for the program was 20,000 MMK per course and one student could pursue a maximum of three courses per season. However, early bird registries could get a 5000 MMK discount. The program also

offered full scholarships to 10 individuals and partial scholarships to two students per course with no prior criterion. In addition, the program provided special allowances (50% off) for any individual who faced direct and negative impacts of the pandemic and political conflicts in Myanmar on their educational and vocational pathways.

**Diagram 1: Education Levels of Students in Khalsang\_2022**



The total registered numbers in the program was 70 individuals, and 45.7% of them were females. As shown in diagram1, most students had a graduate degree. However, nearly one-thirds of them were undergraduate or high school completed youths, and 15.8% were still in the basic education level.

### **2.5. Other Activities**

Besides those above activities, ZEWG financially supported one refugee learning center in Champhai, Mizoram State, in India, and one community learning center in Tonzang, Chin State, Myanmar. The team also helped with the distribution of Home-Based Learning (HBL) materials from UNICEF.

### **Refugee education in Champhai, Mizoram State**

According to a UN humanitarian report, the escalating conflict following the 2021 coup has displaced one in 100 citizens in Myanmar.<sup>3</sup> In Chin State, in April 2022, Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO) estimated that one in five were displaced in neighboring towns in Myanmar and in India.<sup>4</sup> Among them, ZEWG was in contact with one learning center which was providing teaching to 22 children (11 females) who aged 4-16 in a mixed class.

The leader of the learning center reached out to ZEWG for technical and financial support. He said they were also teaching KG and Grades 1-4 children in Myanmar, social studies, civics education, hygiene and health education, and Zo language. ZEWG then helped in seeking donors for them, and received and sent 550,000 MMK (~US\$ 297.3) for buying two whiteboards, nine makers, 20 exercise books, and other stationeries. They indeed needed funding for their teaching volunteers and other facilities, but ZEWG did not receive further donations for them.



*Figure 2. Picture of Refugee Children Learning Center in Champhai, Mizoram State, India*

### **Community learning center in Tonzang town, Chin State**

There is also a community learning center in Tonzang which provides teaching to 159 children. The center also desperately needs funding for hiring a place, teaching compensation for teachers, and stationeries. The center also reached out to ZEWG for curriculum and other aids, and ZEWG could provide only 200,000 MMK (~US\$108) for now. The center leader also requested ZEWG to help develop guidelines for kindergarten teaching. However, ZEWG does not have the capacity for it yet.

### **HBL materials distribution**

From the beginning of 2022, ZEWG was in contact with many villages in Chin State who were providing teaching in their own ways and community learning centers in Kale township. They requested ZEWG for technical and financial support. However, since ZEWG did not have regular funding and other resources already available in hand, ZEWG reached out to UNICEF and KMSS-

<sup>3</sup> UN News, “Number of internally displaced in Myanmar doubles, to 800,000,” accessed June 13, 2022, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/02/1111812>

<sup>4</sup> CHRO, “Percentage of Displaced Populations from Chin State”, accessed June 13, 2022, <https://www.facebook.com/ChinHumanRightsOrganization/posts/5229632387088264>

Kale for available HBL materials. As such, ZEWG voluntarily helped the distribution of HBL materials to seven villages in Tedim Township and two learning centers in Kale Township. There were more villages and learning centers that requested those HBL materials from ZEWG, and ZEWG had submitted their requests to UNICEF for further help.



Figure 3. Pictures of HBL Materials Distributed by ZEWG in Kale

### 3. Challenges

First and foremost, the cost of operating a lightboard studio and creating teaching content is expensive. For this moment, ZEWG has postponed its ZOEd\_LB1 project and content creation since it does not have funding for it. The organization also emphasizes a more interactive class like the flipped virtual class, e.g., the previous ZOEd\_2021 and the upcoming ZOEd\_2022, and potential face-to-face teaching opportunities in some places.

Second, in the ZOEd\_2021, for the first one to two weeks, not only the students but also the teachers faced some difficulties such as creating video lessons, making students learn the video lessons ahead of Zoom meetings, instructing students to mute and unmute their audio and video, and so on. For lower Grades, the management team also requested parents to help their children's learning. Despite those challenges and the unstable internet connection, our teachers reported that they did not experience many challenges.

At the end of the program, we collected feedback from our teachers and 13 of them responded to it. Most teachers said that they felt fine with the flipped virtual class arrangement while one teacher said she could not have the satisfaction of having a face-to-face class. Moreover, one teacher expressed that she would like to have technical support for every class. In fact, for many reasons, ZEWG members were voluntary, and ZEWG had challenges to arrange a kind of full-time assistant for classes. Consequently, ZEWG could not also check whether teachers and students were available in their scheduled classes every day.

One teaching volunteer gave feedback to ZEWG and said that the program looked very unorganized. S/he wanted to have regular meetings among the teaching members, at least those in the same classes and discussion of their works. Her/His suggestion is indeed a good practice in a normal setting. However, ZEWG could not compensate for the cost of such regular meetings yet. Moreover, ZEWG had a concern for the security of every member and did not let everyone know one another. For those reasons, a regular meeting among teaching members was a challenge, and it likely reduced the effectiveness of the program and teachings.

For children who could not attend the Zoom meeting regularly, we asked parents when we had meetings with them. Parents replied that many other parents could not afford electronic devices and internet data fees for their children. Moreover, perhaps because of the internet instability and cultural issues, students likely turned off their video cameras in the classes. Though ZEWG management pushed parents and children to open cameras during classes, it seems it did not work much. One teacher said that “she would like all students to open cameras during classes”, and that would also be one issue ZEWG failed to pursue students.

Previously, the management team pressured students and parents to be removed from the class-groups and further educational opportunities for frequent absenteeism in Zoom discussion. However, many parents requested not to remove their children (who were in the class-groups with parent’s accounts) from the class groups. They promised to let their children watch the video lessons whenever they had a chance. For that reason, we encouraged teachers to record the Zoom discussions and uploaded them to their class groups after each class. As such, our teaching became a combination of three works: create and upload video lessons, conduct and record Zoom discussions related to the created video lessons, and upload the recorded Zoom discussions for students who could not attend the virtual class. Nonetheless, not all our teachers could possess a laptop/computer, and some teachers had challenges recording and uploading Zoom discussion.

This was because the mobile phone version of the Zoom application does not support recording of the meeting.

In the curriculum development, since ZEWG's works are voluntary, ZEWG could not get members to help with some subjects. Although some members agreed to help in the beginning, they could not deliver tasks as planned, and for many reasons, some even left the group in the middle of the process. ZEWG could not do anything for such cases. Moreover, most volunteers have no experience in curriculum development. The quality and coherence of the reduced and contextualized curriculum might be a high challenge.

Regarding the Khalsang\_2022, as this was the very pioneering paid course among Zomi, we needed to break through from the beginning. Since we also liked to cultivate digitalized and well-organized learning platforms – i.e., introducing Google classroom as the moodle -, there were unintentional limitations to those who were not familiar with the Google features. Like the ZOEd\_2021, the program again unintentionally excluded those who could not have access to the Internet. Moreover, some students dropped out in the middle of the course for many reasons, and there will be a large variation between the registered number and the number of students at the end of the program.

In terms of other activities, the most requested one from villagers and community leaders to ZEWG, but what ZEWG is lacking is finance. Moreover, since the primary purpose of ZEWG is to facilitate the development of a Zomi Education System, instead of running its own teaching and system, some villagers' and community leaders' expectations sometimes put ZEWG into a difficult position.

#### **4. Successes**

Firstly, although only 15 English teaching video contents have been created and uploaded, those are always available online, and “likes” and “viewers” are growing daily. ZEWG feels this is also one of its milestones instead of doing nothing.

Second, regarding the ZOEd\_2021, critics might argue that such an online-based educational service could bring benefits only to children who could access the internet, have electronic devices (i.e., smartphones, tablets, and/or computers), and electricity. Indeed, the ZOEd\_2021 program might unintentionally exclude students who could not access internet connection, but the program was the most suitable method to deliver learning opportunities for

many students living under the covid-19 pandemic and political turbulent situations. We are proud of being able to provide learning opportunities for at least 148 students through the program.

Besides teaching formal academic subjects, many parents expressed their appreciation for teaching their children Zolai (Zomi language and literature) and some Zomi traditional stories. Some parents even requested to provide Zolai in middle and high school levels. Most parents expressed their appreciation for organizing the ZOEd\_2021 program and suggested continuing it. Many parents said to us, “You, teachers, are a blessing for us” because they were hopeless for their children without having access to schooling for one and a half years.

We noticed that some students in our program were orphans who were living with their grandparents or in childcare centers. After listening to parents’ responses, both in the meeting and on our social media (Facebook) platform, we can conclude that most students (more than 95% of the children) who were in our ZOEd\_2021 program were those who could not afford fee-paid provisions, e.g., private tuition, but who were really in needs for education.

The forming of the Parent Committee is not only a success for the ZEWG management team but also for our teaching and financial teams. The Parent Committee substantially and ideologically contributed to the organization. As shown in Appendix B, the parent committee also made a monthly financial contribution from February 2022. Moreover, whenever we organized activities – e.g., Christmas and New Year, and Zomi National Day – the parent committee actively supported and participated in the events. Many survey-responded teachers said that they were very satisfied with support from parents.

As shown in Table 2 and section 3.3., the development of a curriculum for the turbulent context is one of ZEWG’s big steps during this challenging time. Many of the curriculum team members are also teaching volunteers in the ZOEd\_2021 program, and their passion and effort are incomparable to people who were working for money. ZEWG is honored to have them.

Amidst many challenges, ZEWG is also proud of its Khalsang\_2022. The courses offered in the program were essential not only for pure knowledge but also for daily practices. As well, the significance of its courses and credential levels of the instructors might be the first of its kind in Zomi history. This is because most instructors had done extensive research in their respective courses. Moreover, the Zolai tonggualh (Grammar) course was a significant improvement for the Zomi in terms of literature and writing. Previously, the Zomi rarely had such a chance, and as a

result, their Zolai grammar and spelling were not standardized. ZEWG believes a course like this Zolai tonggualh would be the beginning of standardizing and modernizing Zomi literature.

Yeah, ZEWG is financially weak, but it has helped fundraising for 22 refugee children in India and 159 children in Tonzang township. The team also assisted the distribution of HBL materials from UNICEF and KMSS for more than a thousand of children in Tedim and Kale Township.

## **5. Summary**

To sum up, ZEWG is a grassroots organization with a working body that includes Zomi teachers' representatives from Tedim, Tonzang, Tamu, and Kale Townships. Alongside those representatives, the parent committee was formed on 12 December 2021 as a supporting body of the organization. From 1 June 2022 to 31 May 2022, ZEWG has conducted teaching video contents creation and ZOEd\_LB1 program, ZOEd\_2021 program and Continuing Learning Program (Khalsang\_2022) which brought learning and knowledge benefits to at least 148 Zomi children (53.4% females) and about 70 (45.7% females) Zomi youths. The organization has an ongoing curriculum development project and has helped HBL material distribution to community learning centers. It also has financially supported one learning center in Tonzang, Chin State and one in Champhai, Mizoram State although the amount was relatively small. For 2022-2023, ZEWG will continue its ZOEd\_2022 and the application for it is open now.

In fact, the prime aim of ZEWG is to facilitate the development of a Zomi Education System rather than developing curricula, courses, and programs. ZEWG prefers to have a consultative and supportive role. Therefore, ZEWG will continuously persuade other stakeholders and organizations among the Zomi to establish schools, like community schools, and learning opportunities for children in need. ZEWG is happy to collaborate with any individual and organization in terms of educational provision, curriculum development, training, and supervision.

## **6. Acknowledgements and Appreciation**

Before and throughout the founding of ZEWG and the development of its activities, ZEWG team members explored and learned from other people and organizations. Among them, we were grateful to D. L. Muon (St. Paul's Institute, Lamka), Sia Sum (MEC & Save the Children), AEM (Hakha), Mi Hlaing Non (Mon National Education Committee), Ko Min Thein Win Tun (MEC), and Tharamu Eh Thwa Dor (Community School Program) for their knowledge and experience sharing.

When we started drafting the ZOEd\_2021 program, ZEWG first considered collecting some small fees from the children to cover parts of the teaching costs. However, ZEWG's members were concerned that parents needed to spend on their children's internet data fees. Many families were already under stress for their daily fundamental needs due to the pandemic and political conflicts. ZEWG thus decided not to collect a fee from children, but to accept donations. Appendix A shows details of our donors and amount. We, the ZEWG, and the Zomi beneficiaries are grateful to each individual and organization for your contributions.

Besides our donors, our warm appreciation goes to:

- Pastor Sangpi
- Dr. Pum Khan Pau
- Rev. Pau Lian Mang
- Dr. Don Sian Man
- Sm Lois Ciang
- Laimai Thak Organization
- Miss Sian Nuam (Zomi Youth Development: ZIUSA), and
- Miss Kimkim Shoute

for their presentations and sharing in the ZEWG's Christmas and New Year" event and "Zomi National Day" event. We also like to express our special thanks to Mr. Shaun, Mr. MC Khai, and Mr. Leo Khai for their donations of licensed Zoom for ZEWG's activities.

Last but not the least, the ZEWG management team would like to appreciate our working and teaching volunteers in the ZOEd\_2021 program, curriculum development, Khalsang\_2022 and other activities. Just because of their selfless contributions, those mentioned programs and activities have been implemented. ZEWG, as an organization, is glad to be able to provide a platform for those volunteers, so that they can contribute to their beloved children and the Zomi community.

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Summary of the Budget: 1 June 2021 – 31 May 2022

Summary	MMK	HKD
Total Fund	13,987,700	30,500
Total Expenditure (1 June 2021 - 31 May 2022)	12,964,200	
<b>Balance</b>	<b>1,023,500</b>	<b>30,500</b>

### Appendix B: Total Fund and List of Donors

Date	Donor	MMK	HKD
09-Sept-21	Zomi Tangval Khat	3,492,400	
22-Sept-21	Pa Tual Khan Khat	10,000	
22-Sept-21	Tongdot	25,000	
22-Sept-21	Nu Dim San Cing	10,000	
22-Sept-21	Kpay %	45,000	
08-Oct-21	Sia Kampi (Ygn)	30,000	
08-Oct-21	Nu Lian Lun Cing	30,000	
09-Oct-21	Sm Mary Haunu	100,000	
10-Oct-21	Nu Man (Lian Lam Tuang)	100,000	
10-Oct-21	Tg Lian Kip Sang (Grade 1)	30,000	
10-Oct-21	Pa Cin Khan Suum	30,000	
13-Oct-21	Kimnu	20,000	
15-Oct-21	Pau Sian Khai	20,000	
15-Oct-21	Pa Zam Sian Mung	20,000	
16-Oct-21	Pa Vungh Do Dal	20,000	
16-Oct-21	Zolia Khat (NW)	50,000	
22-Oct-21	Zomi Innkuan (Germany)	1,207,000	
24-Oct-21	Sai Pau Lian Khai	50,000	
24-Oct-21	Lia Mang Khawm Cing le Lunbiak te	10,000	
29-Oct-21	Pa Vei Suan Pau	30,000	
01-Nov-21	Pa Dal Za Cin	50,000	
04-Nov-21	Tg Khai Lian Lal	50,000	
04-Nov-21	Nu Lian Lun Cing	30,000	
04-Nov-21	Pa Suan Lam Thang	30,000	
04-Nov-21	Tg Mang Muan Mung	30,000	
23-Nov-21	Sia Kampi (Ygn)	20,000	
24-Nov-21	Khai Suan Pau	30,000	

26-Nov-21	Tongdot	30,000	
26-Nov-21	Sm Niang Ngaih Kim	10,000	
26-Nov-21	Kpay %	40,000	
29-Nov-21	Zomi Tangval Khat	100,000	
30-Nov-21	Pa Dal Za Cin	50,000	
02-Dec-21	Loka AL	1,200,000	
02-Dec-21	Nu Lian Lun Cing	30,000	
06-Dec-21	Nu Dim Lam Cing	20,000	
07-Dec-21	Zolia Khat (NW)	50,000	
07-Dec-21	U Thangho	1,674,500	
02-Dec-21	Kpay %	12,000	
02-Dec-21	Tongdot	30,000	
13-Dec-21	Agape Childcare Home	110,000	
18-Dec-21	Zomi Innkuan (Canada)	596,800	
19-Dec-21	Pa Thang Khawm Mung	50,000	
23-Dec-21	Tg Nang Tun Kiim Khai	200,000	
27-Dec-21	Sia Kham Sian Pau	100,000	
28-Dec-21	Nu Niang Nuam Cing	100,000	
29-Dec-21	Sia Kampi (Ygn)	30,000	
29-Dec-21	Rev. Mang Sum Kam	50,000	
30-Dec-21	Sia Let Khaw Suan	100,000	
31-Dec-21	Pastor Sangpi	2,000,000	
31-Dec-21	Laimai Thak	50,000	
04-Jan-22	Nu Lian Lun Cing	30,000	
06-Jan-22	Sia Dal Lian Kam	30,000	
17-Jan-22	Zolia Khat (NW)	50,000	
21-Jan-22	Sm Emma	15,000	
04-Feb-22	Parent Committee	230,000	
17-Feb-22	Zolia Khat (NW)	50,000	
23-Feb-22	Amazon Affiliation	100,000	
01-Mar-22	Sia Lin Lin Aung	30,000	
06-Mar-22	Pa Vum Khen Thang	20,000	
09-Mar-22	Parent Committee (Feb)	200,000	
30-Mar-22	Thangho le Liando	200,000	
30-Mar-22	Nem le a lawmte	550,000	
01-Apr-22	Parent Committee	280,000	
11-Jan-22	Prof. Mark Bray and Dr. Ora Kwo		30,000
28-May-22	Ko Alex Zaw		500
	<b>Sum</b>	<b>13,987,700</b>	<b>30,500</b>

### Appendix C: Summary of Expenditure

Content	Cost (MMK)
Teaching data fees	11,402,000
Operational cost	274,300
Refugee education support	550,000
Lightboard studio	384,400
Tonzang learning center	200,000
Curriculum development	101,000
Emergency response	50,000
Stationeries	2,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,964,200</b>

### Appendix D: Teaching Data Fees

From	To	Measurement	Unit	Unit per cost (MMK)	Amount (MMK)
2-Sept-2021	17-Sept-2021	Period	304	3,000	912,000
20-Sept-2021	1-Oct-2021	Period	393	3,000	1179,000
4-Oct-2021	15-Oct-2021	Period	255	3,000	765,000
18-Oct-2021	29-Oct-2021	Period	260	3,000	780,000
1-Nov-2021	13-Nov-2021	Period	255	3,000	765,000
15-Nov-2021	26-Nov-2021	Period	252	3,000	756,000
29-Nov-2021	10-Dec-2021	Period	248	3,000	744,000
13-Dec-2021	24-Dec-2021	Period	230	3,000	690,000
27-Dec-2021	7-Jan-2022	Period	204	3,000	612,000
10-Jan-2021	21-Jan-2022	Period	255	3,000	765,000
24-Jan-2022	4-Feb-2022	Period	262	3,000	786,000
7-Feb-2022	18-Feb-2022	Period	250	3,000	750,000
21-Feb-2022	4-Mar-2022	Period	219	3,000	657,000
7-Mar-2022	21-Mar-2022	Period	202	3,000	606,000
22-Mar-2022	31-Mar-2022	Period	160	3,000	479,000
2-Apr-2022	17-Apr-2022	Period	52	3,000	156,000
<b>Sum</b>			<b>3,801</b>		<b>11,402,000</b>

### Appendix E: Operational Cost

Date	Reasons	MMK
26-Sept-21	Primary Head Top-up	3,000
	Middle school head top-up	3,000
	High school head top-up	3,000
	Class leader of Grade 1: top-up (batch 1)	3,000
	Class leader of Grade 2: top-up (batch 1)	4,000
	Class leader of Grade 3: top-up (batch 1)	3,000
	Class leader of Grade 4: top-up (batch 1))	3,000
	Class leader of Grade 6: top-up (batch 1)	3,000
	Class leader of Grade 7: top-up (batch 1)	3,000
	Class leader of Grade 8: top-up (batch 1)	3,000

	Class leader of Grade 9: top-up (batch 1)	3,000
	Class leader of Grade 10: top-up (batch 1))	4,000
	Class leader of Grade 11: top-up (batch 1)	7,000
	Class leader of Grade 1: top-up (batch 2)	2,000
	Class leader of Grade 2: top-up (batch 2)	2,000
	Class leader of Grade 3: top-up (batch 2)	2,000
	Class leader of Grade 4: top-up (batch 2)	2,000
	Class leader of Grade 6: top-up (batch 2)	2,000
	Class leader of Grade 7: top-up (batch 2)	2,000
	Class leader of Grade 8: top-up (batch 2)	2,000
	Class leader of Grade 9: top-up (batch 2)	2,000
	Class leader of Grade 10: top-up (batch 2))	2,000
	Class leader of Grade 11: top-up (batch 2)	2,000
26-Nov-21	Meeting of Township Representatives	26,800
02-Dec-21	Transaction fees of Loka AL Funding	6,000
28-Dec-21	Audition	21,500
01-Mar-22	Kale Representative for Ground Data Collection	20,000
01-Mar-22	Tonzang Representative for Ground Data Collection	20,000
01-Mar-22	Township Representatives' Mobile Communication Fees	100,000
01-Apr-22	Audition	15,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>274,300</b>

#### *Appendix F: Support to Refugee and Tonzang Learning Centers*

Title	MMK
Refugee education in Champhai, Mizoram State, India	550,000
Tonzang learning center	200,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>750,000</b>

#### *Appendix G: Lightboard Studio*

Title	Measurement	Unit	Cost per Unit (MMK)	Amount (MMK)
C Clamp		1	5,000	5,000
Spring Clamp		7	2,000	14,000
Acrylic glass		1	200,000	200,000
Steel frame		1	60,000	60,000
Tricycle sap		1	3,000	3,000
LED Striped Light		2	7,300	14,600
Windon maker		4	1,400	5,600
Kpay %		2	700	1,400
LED striped le marker motor sap		2	1,500	3,000
Backdrop cloth 9'10"		1	9,000	9,000
Wire	yard	18	300	5,400
Glass cleaner		1	3,000	3,000

Kpay %		1	1,000	1,000
Stage light		1	8,000	8,000
light bulb		3	4,700	14,100
Plug		2	600	1,200
မီးခေါင်း		3	600	1,800
Wire	set	1	5,000	5,000
Sticker		1	200	200
Roof repairment	yard	1	600	600
Seifie stand		1	10,000	10,000
Sticker		2	250	500
Taxi		1	6,000	6,000
Adapter for lightboard		1	12,000	12,000
<b>Total</b>				<b>384,400</b>

#### Appendix H: Expenses of Curriculum Development Team

Date	Reasons	Measurement	Unit	Per unit cost (MMK)	Amount (MMK)
30-Mar-22	Compensation of data fees for attending a meeting	Person	5	3,000	1,5000
05-Apr-22	Compensation of data fees for attending meeting	Person	6	4,000	2,4000
05-Apr-22	Compensation of data fees for attending a meeting	Person	5	2,000	1,0000
07-Apr-22	Compensation of data fees for attending a meeting	Person	7	4,000	2,8000
07-Apr-22	Compensation of data fees for attending a meeting	Person	1	2,000	2000
12-Apr-22	Compensation of data fees for attending a meeting	Person	11	2,000	2,2000
<b>Sum</b>					<b>101,000</b>

#### Appendix I: Expenses for Emergency and Unusual Cases

Date	Case	MMK
February 2022	Emergency and social support to a teaching volunteer	<b>50,000</b>

#### Appendix J: Stationeries

Data	Measurement	Unit	Cost per Unit (MMK)	Amount (MMK)
26-Nov-21	Notebook for finance	1	2,500	<b>2,500</b>