At first glance, it may seem out of place to talk about a climate emergency in Myanmar, at a time when so many emergencies in the country are more pressing. Sociopolitical conflict, COVID-19, human rights abuses and displacement are affecting millions of people. With so many crises, there is little bandwidth left to think about climate change.

The issue only becomes a priority when a Cyclone Nargis or Mala destroys villages and kills tens of thousands of people. Much of the damage caused by climate change is more insidious and long lasting. Ask rice farmers in Myanmar and they will tell you how weather changes are affecting rice yields year on year. Ask mountain villagers, they will tell you that roads to hospitals and services are being increasingly washed away by torrential rain. Ask people in Myanmar’s Central Dry Zone, they will tell you of worsening annual heatwaves.

In fact, Myanmar is ranked as the second most vulnerable country in the world to climate change - mainly due to flood risks in the vast lowlands and wetlands. The danger to life has already been proven, with Cyclone Nargis alone killing around 140,000 people.

Despite the severity of the risk, little is being done to mitigate due to the other multiple crises which Myanmar currently faces. Even at a local level, communities are unable to protect themselves due to a lack of skills or knowledge about mitigating extreme weather events.

This is where organisations like Prospect Burma can give a helping hand. Tackling climate change isn’t just a matter for climate scientists. It takes an understanding of the issues by house builders, farmers, conservationists, road planners, water engineers and many other professions.

Individual professionals can make a huge difference at local level, and together can influence national and even international policy. They are desperately needed now - before, not after - the next extreme weather event decimates more defenceless villages.

Your support gives dedicated, determined young women and men in Myanmar the opportunity to study to become those professionals. Thank you.

Best wishes,
The political landscape is highly complex. Snr-Gen. Min Aung Hlaing and the SAC generals show no indication of relenting or stepping down. Meanwhile Aung San Suu Kyi and leaders of the National League for Democracy who won last year’s general election remain in detention, facing long jail terms. The security services have continued to suppress the non-violent protests of Generation Z and the Civil Disobedience Movement. To date, over 1,200 civilians have been killed and more than 7,000 arrested.

Opposition, however, has not been ended. Rather, resistance has multiplied and metamorphosed into new forms. The country is in as great a state of division as at any time since independence in 1948. There are, in effect, two governments claiming legitimacy: the military SAC and pro-democracy National Unity Government of NLD MPs-elect, ethnic and civil society representatives. There is also a diversity of ethnic armed organisations and new People’s Defence Forces which are also opposed to the SAC. In the midst of these struggles, many communities feel trapped.

It is notable then, that the international community – including both Asian and Western governments – have been deeply troubled by this regressive turn in events. Neither the SAC nor NUG are accorded full recognition. Recently, this was most evident at the UN General Assembly in New York when it was decided to continue representation of the NLD-appointed ambassador, Kyaw Moe Tun. Against this backdrop, pressures have increased for actions to be taken for human rights violations at such bodies as the International Criminal Court and International Court of Justice. To date, however, the United Nations has struggled to achieve a coherent policy that has impact on the ground.

The humanitarian situation is desperate in many parts of the country. The health and education systems have collapsed, and schools and universities have been closed for the best part of 18 months due to COVID-19 and the coup. Over 42,000 public health workers have been fired or quit their jobs in support for the CDM; over 200,000 staff have quit or been dismissed in the education sector; over 1.7 million people are refugees or internally displaced, including a further 250,000 civilians forced from their homes since the coup (of whom 76,000 are children); and the COVID-19 third wave has been rampant. Officially, the death toll is 18,700. But independent health workers believe that the true figure could be at least ten times as high.

Tragically, too, casualties from civil war are still increasing in many parts of the country. Most of the 14 states and regions are presently impacted. The 2015 Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement is essentially defunct, and the Chin, Kachin, Karen, Kayah and Shan States – as well as parts of the Magway and Sagaing Regions – are continuing to witness scenes of daily conflict. Burma is presently one of the world’s most strife-torn countries.

For the moment, it is difficult to predict any imminent change in the divisive course of events. During its 32-year history, Prospect Burma has been through some very difficult times. It is salutary, then, to note that hope is not lost among young people. By supporting education, great progress has been made in spreading knowledge and opportunity in diverse fields during the past three decades – including health, law, environment and human rights. This reminds us that this is not a time for despair but the moment to step up commitment. It is presently a dark time. But the struggle for freedom is by no means at an end.
Climate change mitigation - Reducing Myanmar’s greenhouse gas emissions

Unlike many countries, Myanmar currently absorbs more greenhouse gases (GHGs) than it emits.

This net absorption of GHGs occurs for two reasons:

- The country has the largest standing forests in mainland South East Asia, which absorb GHGs. It has around 42% forest cover¹.

- It is one of the world’s lowest emitters of greenhouse gases (GHGs). This is due to much of its economy being agricultural rather than industrial. In fact, estimates in the 2010s suggest cattle and buffalos alone were emitting more GHGs than the country’s entire industrial sector (13% vs 10%)¹!

However, this carbon ‘sink’ status could change in the coming years due to rapid deforestation and industrialisation.

As a signatory to the 2016 Paris Agreement on climate change, Myanmar was obligated to publish a plan to reduce emissions, ahead of the 2021 Glasgow climate change conference, COP26.

That plan was published in draft in 2020. In July 2021, the UN eventually received two copies - one from the State Administration Council (SAC) and the other from the National Unity Government (NUG). In their cover letters, both bodies’ Union Ministers for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation emphasised the need for international support to meet their carbon reduction targets.

Climate Justice

The Union Ministers’ comments reflect the Paris Agreement’s acknowledgement that developed countries often emit the most GHGs, but undeveloped countries are often the most affected by the impacts.

The agreement recognises this is unjust and that, while there is an element of restorative justice, it is also in the whole world’s interest for countries to help each other to reduce emissions. Therefore, Myanmar is able to call on three types of support from developed countries: financial, technical and capacity-building.

To receive this support, Myanmar needs to have clear policy and plans for investors and politicians to buy into. It has “a coherent and well-aligned framework for green growth”, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) which advises international investors. Myanmar has ratified most international commitments to green growth, and has a formal climate change plan built into a wider national Sustainable Development Plan.

With only around half of Myanmar’s population having access to electricity, the OECD identifies energy as the prime field of investment for international players to help Myanmar limit its GHG emissions. It cites an immediate market for 2,300 community mini-grids covering 2 million people². With limited mains...
electricity, locally based solar, wind and hydropower would help Myanmar reduce its reliance on natural gas.

In recent years, the country’s primary development partners for climate change have been Japan, World Bank, International Financial Corporation, Germany and the UK². However, the collapse of Myanmar’s economy following the military’s assumption of power is pushing international investors away. International aid funding to Myanmar has also largely stopped, due to a mixture of Western sanctions and political uncertainty.

The situation is summed up by the closure of the Global Green Growth Institute’s (GGGI) operation in Myanmar. GGGI has a role to attract green investment within the auspices of UN climate change policy. If facilitators for green investment are pulling out, then Myanmar has little hope of meeting the targets published in its climate change plans.

In COP26 for financial support packages, Myanmar will not have access to climate justice due to its current political and economic situation.

Myanmar’s solo efforts to reduce GHG emissions

Although it has clear environmental policies and plans, Myanmar’s environmental performance and record is poor by global standards. It is ranked 138 out of 180 countries in a global Environmental Performance Index³. Mining and the burning of agricultural and other waste is rapidly increasing its emissions. Its capacity to absorb GHGs is shrinking over time with the loss of 10 million hectares of forest in 25 years⁴ - five times the size of Wales.

Myanmar has also received criticism for poor environmental monitoring. The World Bank says there is a lack of effective environmental impact assessments. GGGI says there is no data system or expert in place to monitor continued deforestation, so Myanmar cannot meet its targets because it cannot measure the damage.

With international restrictions in place on timber exports, observers including the Environmental Investigation Agency, accuse the State Administration Council of illegal timber trading⁵. Large tracts of forest are also under the stewardship of Ethnic Armed Organisations who have long been involved in logging, mining and other environmentally damaging practices.

Against this backdrop, Myanmar’s Climate Change Plan - endorsed by both the SAC and NUG - contains a massive 311 action points⁶.

**Hydropower**

Hydropower creates energy with few GHG emissions, compared to burning fossil fuels. Currently, 45% of Myanmar’s energy mix is hydropower.

But clean energy can also be harmful to the local environment. China has longstanding plans to build seven dams in northern Kachin State as part of Myanmar’s hydro strategy. Work began on the Myitsone Dam in 2009 but was suspended in 2011 due to concerns including environmental damage, social impact and the fact that much of the energy would be exported to China.

Myitsone is widely touted as a victory for people power, although other theories exist for why it was suspended. Myanmar’s climate strategy now focuses on mini-hydro projects, saying⁶: “Due to increasing national sensitivities around social and environmental safeguards associated with large-scale hydropower infrastructure development, the government has reduced its intended expansion of this energy source from 38% (of the country’s energy mix) to 31%”.

Myitsone remains suspended, but not cancelled.
In relation to reducing GHGs, the main points include:

- Achieve 53% energy from solar, wind and hydropower (currently 46%, almost entirely hydropower) - mainly community “mini-grids”
- Reduce deforestation by 50%
- Increase tree cover in agricultural areas
- Distribute 5.1 million cooking stoves to reduce deforestation due to burning wood as fuel
- Mini-grids to supply renewable energy to 2.7 million people to reduce use of diesel generators.

All the above assume international support will be forthcoming. But it is unclear how these targets can be met in practice. That is not to say a lot of work has already taken place with 20 forestry projects alone, supported by partners including Unilever, the Swedish Postcode Lottery and the Smithsonian Institution⁶. Forest project funding tripled between 2014 and 2019.

However, partners like these now face trade or aid restrictions, and workers on the ground face very real threats. Prospect Burma’s students and alumni report that ‘on the ground’ conservation projects have stopped in the current political situation. Even the government’s climate change stakeholder panel, which included the likes of WWF, has disappeared without trace. Green growth in Myanmar has come to a halt.

References:
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Prospect Burma students & alumni, reducing Myanmar’s GHGs

Even though national climate change efforts are stalling, young people are studying to learn skills to create a low GHG emission environment.

Billy’s story
BSc Engineering at RIST, India

“I grew up in a very remote place where there is no electricity, there is no proper transportation system, there is no water.

Most of the people in my village are farmers. Most of the houses we build by using wood and bamboo. To build a house with cut up trees is not very good, because we have increased climate change.

These houses only last 5-6 years which is not economical. With fewer trees, there are landslides. We can only use the road during the summer because of landslides in the rainy season.

We have the natural resources, but we don’t have engineers that know how to build. That really motivates me to study civil engineering.

Before, I was very shy, I didn’t have much confidence. But I am learning how to speak with different people. After I finish my study I will go back to my village, I will be working to guide the villagers how to do proper constructing.”
“In my community we have been destroying the forest for farming. Every year, more than 25 acres per year. We used the wood for burning fuel or building houses. The farmers in this community shifted from one place to another, cutting the trees and burning. The reason is they didn’t know how to keep the soil fertile.

I have brought knowledge from the outside how to have sustainable farming. Now, our forests have been conserved and our people start having knowledge about how to protect the forest. Before, the farmers do not know the relationship between the trees and us. Now they are understanding we are getting oxygen from the trees.

Before, the community looked down on farmers because people do farming only when there is no option for survival. But attitudes have changed. Now everybody is doing farming, even the doctors and nurses, government staff and everybody. They are proud to be farmers.”

*Photos: (top) teaching farmers about deforestation, (middle) introducing vegetables that can be grown on the same soil throughout the year, (below) storing rainfall to keep soil moist all year round (cr: PB alumni)
The shape of the country is sometimes likened to a water spill from a bowl. Meltwaters spill southwards from the heights of the Eastern Himalayas down to the Indian Ocean. They carry sediment which washes down to the coast and settles to create the Irrawaddy Delta, which has expanded out into the ocean over millions of years. The south of the country is a low, flat landscape, bordered by folds of high ground pushed up by the fault line which runs north-south through Myanmar.

The country is split into three broad zones. The Central Dry Zone has less than 100cm rain per year and summer highs of over 40°C. The Hilly Zone has medium rainfall and winter lows of -1°C. The Coastal Zone has warm temperatures throughout and high rainfall, up to 500cm of rain per year.

All three zones are impacted by warmer conditions caused by climate change. Seawater expands slightly as it warms, which raises the sea level (and is exacerbated by the melting of polar ice caps).

It also warms and expands the air above, which creates stronger movement of air which is able to hold more moisture. This creates stronger winds and heavier rain.

Conversely, warm air can take longer to recharge with moisture, and ground that dries out can become less permeable, so the risk of drought also increases.

The overall effect is rainfall events which are fewer, but more extreme when they happen. Myanmar’s tropical position and landscape make it particularly vulnerable to this process.

The Coastal Zone is at risk from fluvial flooding from the north, saltwater flooding from storm surges to the south, and extreme rainfall where monsoons and cyclones make landfall.

The flat landscape allows floods to spread widely and recede slowly. Saltwater flooding is especially damaging, rendering key agricultural land infertile for many years. It also pollutes underground freshwater aquifers used for crops and drinking water.

The Dry Zone is exposed to chronic drought, while flash floods wash out roads and villages in the Hilly Zone. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MONREC) reports copious evidence of climate change already impacting upon Myanmar. Over the last six decades:

- mean temperature has risen by around 0.08% per decade
- overall rainfall has risen across the country - although it has fallen in some areas
- the southwest monsoon period is shorter by around 20 days, but with more intense rainfall
- extreme events like cyclones now happen annually rather than every three years
- more extreme high temperatures
- sea level is rising
- increased occurrence of flooding

Myanmar’s climate change plan submitted to the UN focuses squarely on “socio-economic resilience”. In essence, it uses the potential economic losses from climate change as leverage to justify spending.
It also puts a financial figure on the value of mangroves, forests and other natural features which help to buffer the power of wind and water, while absorbing carbon. The SAC’s narrative puts emphasis on integrating nature-based solutions across all sectors.

The strategy is very high level. It refers to creating sustainable livelihoods, “climate-smart” ways of working, disaster recovery contingencies, and using technology to drive clean, safe development. The language is similar to other countries with phrasing including “build back better”.

The challenge is turning words into reality. Many activities lie outside of government, with all sectors of society being responsible for positive change. The current political situation leaves no one with sufficient nationwide influence to drive that change.

There are clearly huge volumes of excellent groundwork already in place. But, sadly, many of those behind that work are now keeping their heads down while the strategy gathers dust on a shelf.

In the meantime, it is projected that thousands, possibly millions, could lose access to fresh water due to saltwater inundation in the Delta region. In a country already torn by conflict, the thought of additional conflict and mass displacement in order to survive is depressing indeed.

In developed countries, the expertise and organisation exists to tackle these problems with careful planning and flood alleviation infrastructure. In Myanmar, the need to develop similar expertise is as great as ever.
Myanmar’s climate adaptation plans may have reached a cul-de-sac. But experts in related fields are still finding ways to make a difference, including applying for support from Prospect Burma to improve their skills.

Whether it is monitoring the natural world for warning signs of climate change, or working with nature to find solutions, our students and alumni are working hard to make a positive difference.

“As conservationists, we need to understand that we are not specialists on everything that affects us. But we need to understand, to investigate and to know in time what is wrong with animals, their habitats and food chains due to climate change. Then, we can organise and solve problems. We can engage and work together with other professionals to solve the problems.

I worked on conservation in the Irrawaddy and Chindwin Rivers for two bird species: the Black-bellied Tern, and the River Tern. Their breeding success is affected by climate change.

They only breed on sandbars, mostly islands. They breed from February up to April or May, when the water level is low. But extreme torrential rain from the headwaters of the rivers washes away nests and chicks. Their numbers have dramatically decreased. In our 2018-19 survey, we only found 12 individuals in the Irrawaddy River. In the Chindwin River, we haven’t seen any individuals since 2012.

We also see torrential rain damaging the nests of the Sarus Crane, the world’s tallest flying bird. The rainy season is starting later and they are breeding later. We do not yet have strong research on the relationship between climate change and breeding, but in terms of experience, we see it.

Climate change is another stress to add to other stresses affecting animals, so we need to try to manage...
all of these together.

Stresses affect all bird and animal species, habitats and the food chain. This includes heavy fauna, endemic reptile species such as the Burmese Eye Turtle, and visitors such as the Critically Endangered Yellow-Breasted Bunting which migrates to Myanmar all the way from Eastern Russia.

In the Delta area, the ‘Rice Bowl of Myanmar’, a main threat is habitat loss as wet grassland is converted to fish farms or rice and bean production. Also, the intensive use of chemicals in the agriculture process is very bad for water.

Our response is to promote community based conservation projects. We plan to work with local farmers to produce rice which meets the Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP) Standard. The criteria include reducing chemicals. It is a Standard to reduce stress on humans and animals by producing healthy food.

We aim to link farmers with international buyers to produce wildlife-friendly products, based around the Sarus Crane.

We have seen this work in Cambodia where wildlife-friendly rice is linked to species. The farmers produce rice to SRP guidelines which helps species such as the Bengal Florican and Giant Ibis, which are both Critically Endangered (there are fewer than 200 mature Giant Ibis in the whole world). International buyers produce value added products like organic Ibis Rice, which they export to markets such as Singapore and Germany. They get a premium price due to the link with conservation.

This is our plan and our dream to make this kind of product with the Sarus Crane. This species is very important to our culture and our belief. We believe the Buddha had a previous life as a Sarus Crane, so it is bad to destroy one. This is a positive belief for conservation.

If we can promote this kind of approach, we can reduce climate change because agriculture and meat production produces a lot of carbon dioxide.

We have also been promoting community based ecotourism for alternative income. This is in progress, but we cannot continue due to the political situation. Since February, nobody keeps working on conservation because the situation is not stable here. I don’t know why we have to stop. We are not political, we are helping people and animals.

We need conservation science to identify cause and effects, then we can consider the right solutions. I have a lot of practical experience but I am still weak on technical thinking and scientific methodology. If I can fill this kind of gap, I can work more successfully to protect our wildlife in our country. Conservation doesn’t just benefit our country, it benefits countries all over the world because everything is linked to each

Photos: top to bottom: Black-bellied tern; ground nest vulnerable to flooding; searching for nests (all field photos, cr: Naing Lin)
Kyaw Myo Lwin’s story
Studied MSc Forestry in Vietnam, has since been working on mangrove restoration in Myanmar

“My area of study was allometric modelling and biomass calculation on delta mangroves in Myanmar. The site-specific models from my research are very useful to calculate the carbon sequestration rate of plantations and natural mangrove forests. This supports study of the consequences of deforestation and global carbon balance.

Mangrove forests serve as breeding grounds for aquatic creatures. I would like to share here a famous saying by Sayar U Win Maung, one of the Myanmar’s highest mangrove experts: “No mangrove; no fish”! A half life cycle of 70% sea creatures is within mangrove forests. In larvae and juvenile stages, fish, crabs and shrimps live in mangrove forests but in adult stage, they go to the sea and never come back again.

There can be no doubt that mangroves play an important role for the mitigation of climate change because they can store three to five times more carbon than upland forests.

They have many advantages such as protection from salt intrusion, tsunami, cyclones and storm surges. They also provide non-timber forest products, e.g. fruits, vegetables, medicine, honey, bush meat, nypa (palm) leaves and wood fuel etc. for local people.

Myanmar has the third largest area of mangroves in South East Asia (8.8% in 2007) and the seventh largest of any country in the world (5011 km2 in 2018). There are three main mangrove areas in Myanmar: Rakhine State, Ayeyarwady Region and Tanintharyi Division.

Southeast Asia has the greatest mangrove loss area in the world due to the conversion of mangrove forests to aquaculture and agriculture. The reasons for deforestation and degradation in Myanmar include over-exploitation, mainly wood fuel and charcoal production, and illegal expansion of paddy fields into mangrove reserve forests. Other reasons include illegal salt production, shrimp farming and land grabbing by businessmen.

Woodcutters cut mangroves for their livelihoods, and they totally depend on mangrove forests. If we force them not to cut the mangroves, you can imagine this will not be a reasonable solution for mangrove deforestation and degradation in coastal regions, leading to illegal cutting.

So, creating alternative incomes (e.g. nursery workers, Kyaw Myo Lwin in mangrove mud: Mangrove roots trap the carbon in silt washed up by tides and heavy seas. The weight of seawater packs it very densely, making mangroves one of the world’s most efficient carbon storage sinks.
patrolling Protected Areas, growing cash crops, local guides for ecotourism) for woodcutters by the government makes more sense than any others.

Awareness sometimes is not effective. Based on my field experience, we have to pay villagers some incentives (such as daily wages, efficient stoves, basic foods, etc.) for gathering in a chairperson’s house or monastery. Most of them just listen and do not follow the guidelines we talk about practically. They show more interest in incentives than environmental awareness. It highlights livelihood is more important than awareness.

The Forest Department (FD) and many NGO organizations like Worldview International Foundation (WIF) and Mangrove Service Network (MSN) that actively participate in mangrove conservation, restoration, rehabilitation and reforestation in Myanmar establish huge hectares of mangrove plantations annually. (I was a field assistant in WIF the last three years.) Government staff are very limited and it is not possible to nurture all plantations. So Forest Governance without the local community is fruitless.

Last week, I read terrible news entitled: “No more Forest Department (FD) staffs on Wunbaik Reserved Mangrove Forest (WRMF) in Rakhine State”. Rakhine State was one of the political unrest areas in Myanmar many years ago. So FD staff were not safe there and they fought against woodcutters frequently who violated the forest rules. According to the local people’s voice: “About 200 tons of mangroves are lost every day in WRMF for charcoal production”.

Since February, the situation has worsened nationwide and many FD staff participate in the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM). Consequently, local people cut the trees severely from plantations, Protected Areas (PAs) and Reserved Forests (RFs). Forests are almost gone and conservation activities cannot be handled efficiently now.”

Mangroves in action: In this aerial photo, mangroves protect a sea wall from the threat of storm surges and heavy seas. Much of Myanmar’s low-lying Coastal Zone is not protected by sea walls, so relies entirely on mangroves as defense against sea flooding. (cr: NARAI)
Developing skills to face worsening climate change

If Myanmar is to become resilient to climate change, and to play its part in reducing global warming, it needs expertise.

But the country cannot currently develop that expertise because, for most young people, there is no access to higher education. Education has collapsed due to the conflict and covid, on top of years of under-investment.

Prospect Burma is addressing that skills gap. Not just to tackle climate change, but to help young people build a safe, sustainable society to live in. Despite the current challenges, our post high-school and university access programmes continue with renewed urgency.

Access to Learning

Our post-high school programme, called Access to Learning, provides a bridge to higher education for bright young people from under-served communities, who would otherwise be denied the opportunity.

It focuses on English language skills and qualifications, critical thinking (analysing evidence, questioning, creating solutions) and digital fluency to lift students to a level where they can apply for and succeed at university level.

Importantly, the learning is often conducted through exploration of gender, ethnic and cultural identity which encourages understanding, tolerance and respect.

30 students have been enrolled at our Sittwe Education Resource Centre (SERC) in Rakhine State. A local partner, Scholar Institute, manages SERC. The Centre’s online activity reaches hundreds more people in local communities.

Photo: Young people studying diligently at the Sittwe Education Resource Centre before last year’s lockdown (cr: Scholar Institute)
A further 43 students have just completed our first ever fully online course, called Prospect Connect.

Launched in June 2021, Prospect Connect is an online response to the threat to young people’s safety and their education, posed by COVID-19 and violence since the military’s assumption of power in February 2021. Working with a local partner, Edulink, this project delivers English language and critical thinking learning to students across Kayin, Kayah, Shan, Kachin, Chin and Rakhine States.

Workshop topics such as digital security, religious diversity, civic education and leadership have generated intense discussion amongst the student participants; workshops scheduled for one hour have gone on for three!

Feedback from our first cohort of Prospect Connect students

“This course is important because it can be accessed from all over the country. We have all connected with each other. Even if we apply to university separately, we can all share and support each other and this connection we have with each other will not end.”

“Both workshops and activities are very helpful. I wanted to go study abroad, but had no idea how to plan or progress. Now I can understand a lot of info on how to plan for my study abroad. I received a lot of skills as well.”

“Having a laptop improves the quality of my work and also I can deliver my due projects on time and organise the workload accordingly. I assure you that providing me with this opportunity will not be wasted. I will be a better student. Thank you!”

Va Hlao Tlei

“I am writing this letter to express my firm gratitude for the amazing opportunity you have provided me with, by issuing me a laptop for my studies. This way I can pay keen attention without any interference and complete my work without any delay.”

Teccho

Learning to Leadership

Our international scholarship programme, called Learning to Leadership, opens doors to quality higher education abroad. We reach out to remote and conflict-affected communities to help prospective students select the right course for their future. Funders and donors help to cover costs of tuition, travel, visas, learning materials and living expenses. We provide additional support to young people including orientation, peer-to-peer mentoring and pastoral care.

We are currently supporting 66 scholars (31 new and 35 continuing). Some are unable to travel due to COVID-19 or security concerns, and some courses are being delivered online. Feedback from our scholars identified a need for laptops which they could not otherwise afford. We are currently fundraising to supply more laptops.
How YOU can help
Myanmar tackle climate change

We all know it’s a good thing to reduce our consumption and to recycle. Hopefully this newsletter brings home the direct link that, when we emit carbon, the resulting warming of sea and air causes people in low-lying tropical nations like Myanmar to lose their lives or livelihoods.

As climate change worsens, Myanmar has a specific additional need. It needs knowledge and expertise to organise and build ways to protect itself from extreme weather, flooding and drought.

You can help by investing in dedicated young people from Myanmar who want to learn skills to create an environmentally sustainable future. Search online for Prospect Burma and head to the Donate page on our website, prospectburma.org/donate.