



Community Development Education Phase II - Myanmar

Budget: \$32,000 needed. Year 2 of a 3-year project (beginning 1/11/17). Year 2 budget total: \$52,000

Update:

This three-year project is phase II of a previous Entrust-supported community development project. The project involves training facilitators in the troubled Rakhine state to work with local communities to undertake participatory, community-driven, sustainable community development projects. The Rakhine State is extremely poor and suffers from the upheaval of inter-ethnic violence between the Buddhist Rakhine majority and the Muslim Rohingya.



Since this project began in April 2017, our partners have directly helped 18,888 individuals with community development training across five communities. Progress for the past six months has been measured against 5 goals:

- *Improved livelihoods and incomes* – villagers are starting to take ownership of projects, rather than expecting a hand-out. This is a significant change in the mind-set of the community. This will lead to more sustainable income in the longer-term. Communities are also starting to replicate good projects they have witnessed to help themselves.
- *Economic empowerment* – a number of seed projects such as roads and bridges have opened the way for villagers to move their produce to other communities which they previously could not access. Community-driven projects such as building a dam, constructing a community meeting place, building simple healthcare clinics or adding a classroom to a school have also benefitted the community who are learning to work together towards common goals.
- *Sustainable locally-led community development committees* - the 10 Entrust-supported facilitators are doing well, despite little financial resources. Our partners are considering ways that facilitators can become self-sustaining after the project ends, so that the community will continue to benefit from their expertise.
- *Community-led peace building* - women are participating more freely in peace-building initiatives which develops confidence to step up as leaders. There has also been a significant change in the attitude towards the Muslim community, encouraging communities to live alongside each other. With the ongoing tension between Muslims and Buddhists in this area, our partners have increased the focus on peace-building.
- *Strengthened relationships between government authorities and local villages* - the facilitators suggest that attitudes are slowly changing as local authorities evidence first-hand the benefits of community development projects. Trust and goodwill are a bridge that continues to build. Corruption continues to be an issue at large in the country as a whole.

Our partners said, *“Peace-building initiatives are playing a key role in this part of the country. The communities are also seeing the impact of working together. By having the community invest in projects, they are becoming personally invested in outcomes.”*

Thank you for supporting this troubled area. Community development and peace-building initiatives are essential for this region to gain a foothold.