



graceworks  
MYANMAR

# 2019/2020 Annual Report



# Contents



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*In a year shaped by a global pandemic, the role of empowerment and ownership in community development, and specifically community resilience, became more evident than ever.*

*We are stronger together.*

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## Our mission

Empowering sustainable development for improved quality of life and holistic wellbeing of Myanmar's people

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## Our purpose

Providing vital connections and promoting opportunities by building capacity and partnering for long-term value to enable personal empowerment and community-based development

## Our values



### Social justice

People have inherent value and capacity. We work alongside people in Myanmar to support them in gaining the freedoms they need to achieve the quality of life they desire. Integrity is at the heart of everything we do as we seek to address injustices with positive, long-term development that contributes to breaking the cycle of poverty.

### Empowerment

People don't live in sectors. Only NGOs do. That's why we approach everything from a holistic perspective. We aim for sustainable outcomes that empower people through processes and results. We are more interested in enabling the good ideas of local people than simply delivering our own.

### Equity

We emphasise respect and inclusivity for all, regardless of gender, religion, ethnicity, age or background, and seek to address marginalisation and exclusion based on these factors. We are driven by compassion and cultural sensitivity. We invest in building understanding and challenging our own thinking so that we are part of long-term change rather than band-aid solutions.

### Partnership

Genuine two-way partnerships that emphasise self-sustainability are central to our contribution in Myanmar. We focus on grassroots partners and projects founded in mutual accountability and transparency.

### Capacity building

We work to increase the capacity of our partners, rather than creating dependency on us. Success in the long-term will mean we've done ourselves out of a job. Participatory processes give us the opportunity for mutual learning. They make the journey as important as the destination so that we contribute to home-grown development capacity.

# CEO and Chair report



GraceWorks Myanmar (GWM) started the year on a growth trajectory following the success of our community development and peacebuilding projects in Rakhine State. Complementing these projects was the success of our partnership with ActionAid Myanmar who, with five other consortium members, was awarded a grant from the European Union for a project called Building Cultural Bridges. GWM was engaged to deliver the arts-based peacebuilding model to consortium members and trainers, who are, in turn, disseminating the teaching to various ethnic and religious groups in Rakhine State.

The excellence shown in these projects and our broader network, including in education and health, is testament to the highest standards adhered to by our local partners and staff. They work in some of the harshest and most challenging living conditions in Myanmar. Changes in communities are transformational and inspiring as we see a shift of ownership in local village members from a culturally hierarchical model of male leadership, to a more gender-balanced committee structure where women have a voice and are becoming part of the decision-making process. A significant development has been the introduction of village books to communities. These are compilations of village activities and achievements through community development education (CDE) training.



*PSimmons*

**Peter Simmons**  
Founder and CEO

Most inspiring has been the ability of our teams to continue expanding and growing through the unsettling time of COVID-19. Disasters such as ethnic conflict, flooding and food shortages are not uncommon to people in the areas in which we work. The resilience and strength of communities to withstand these threats underpins their belief that we are stronger together.

We are very aware the pandemic, while levelling the field in that it affects everyone, will still impact the most fragile and marginalised the hardest – those without the resilience needed to survive. There are many lessons to learn through this time as travel restrictions prevent face-to-face training and leadership is provided remotely, shifting greater responsibility to local partners and changing the way we function.

During the year, we saw a change of GWM's Chair as Ben Muller stepped aside and Veronica (Ronnie) Faggotter was appointed to the role. Ben has been a fine ambassador for GWM, having served on the Board for five years including two as Chairperson.

In this challenging time of COVID-19, we thank you for your loyalty, understanding and ongoing support.



*RFaggotter*

**Veronica (Ronnie) Faggotter**  
Chairperson

# Board of Directors



**Ben Muller – Chairperson (outgoing)**

More than 15 years in projects, operations and senior management roles in the construction and material supply sector; recent project management experience in the water industry; Chairman of his local school board; qualified civil engineer with an MBA from Deakin University.



**Ronnie Faggotter – Chairperson (incoming)**

More than 20 years in the private and public sectors including public housing; Director of State Recovery Office for the South Australian Government (2005-2019); recipient of the Local Government Association Jim Hullick Award for outstanding collaboration with local government in the area of recovery (2017); Fund Administrator for the South Australian State Emergency Relief Fund.



**Des Collinson – Treasurer**

More than 40 years in finance; founding partner of a chartered accountancy business in Adelaide; a director of Australia Medic Alert Foundation; a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants.



**Peter Simmons – Founder and CEO**

Founder of GWM and recognised expert in grassroots development work in Myanmar; more than 35 years in business and community leadership; a Fellow of the Institute of Managers and Leaders; former winner of the Collie Trust Foundation scholarship; Master of International and Community Development (ICD) graduate.



**Rob Cunningham**

More than 20 years in social research, impact and evaluation; specialist in trauma-based work in child protection and youth mental health; former Australian Government specialist on international disaster response teams; current PhD student exploring sport-for-development program impacts on young people from post-conflict settings.



**Zoe Solomon**

More than 4 years in executive administration and project roles in not-for-profit organisations; Bachelor of Psychology and Graduate Certificate of ICD graduate (master pending).

# Corporate governance



## Board of Directors

During the year, the Board comprised five members at any given time: Ben Muller (Chairperson – outgoing), Ronnie Faggotter (Chairperson – incoming), Des Collinson (Treasurer), Peter Simmons (Founder and CEO), Rob Cunningham and Zoe Solomon.

## Audit

The Treasurer ensures an external financial audit is undertaken once every 12 months and the audit report and accounts are forwarded to the Chairperson and board members.

## Annual General Meeting

The end of the financial year for GWM is 30 June. The Board may determine the date, time and place of the GWM Annual General Meeting (AGM). The notice convening the AGM specifies the meeting is an annual general meeting. The ordinary business of the AGM is to:

- Confirm the minutes of the previous AGM and any general meeting held since that meeting
- Receive board reports on the activities and status of GWM
- Review the transactions of GWM during the previous financial year.

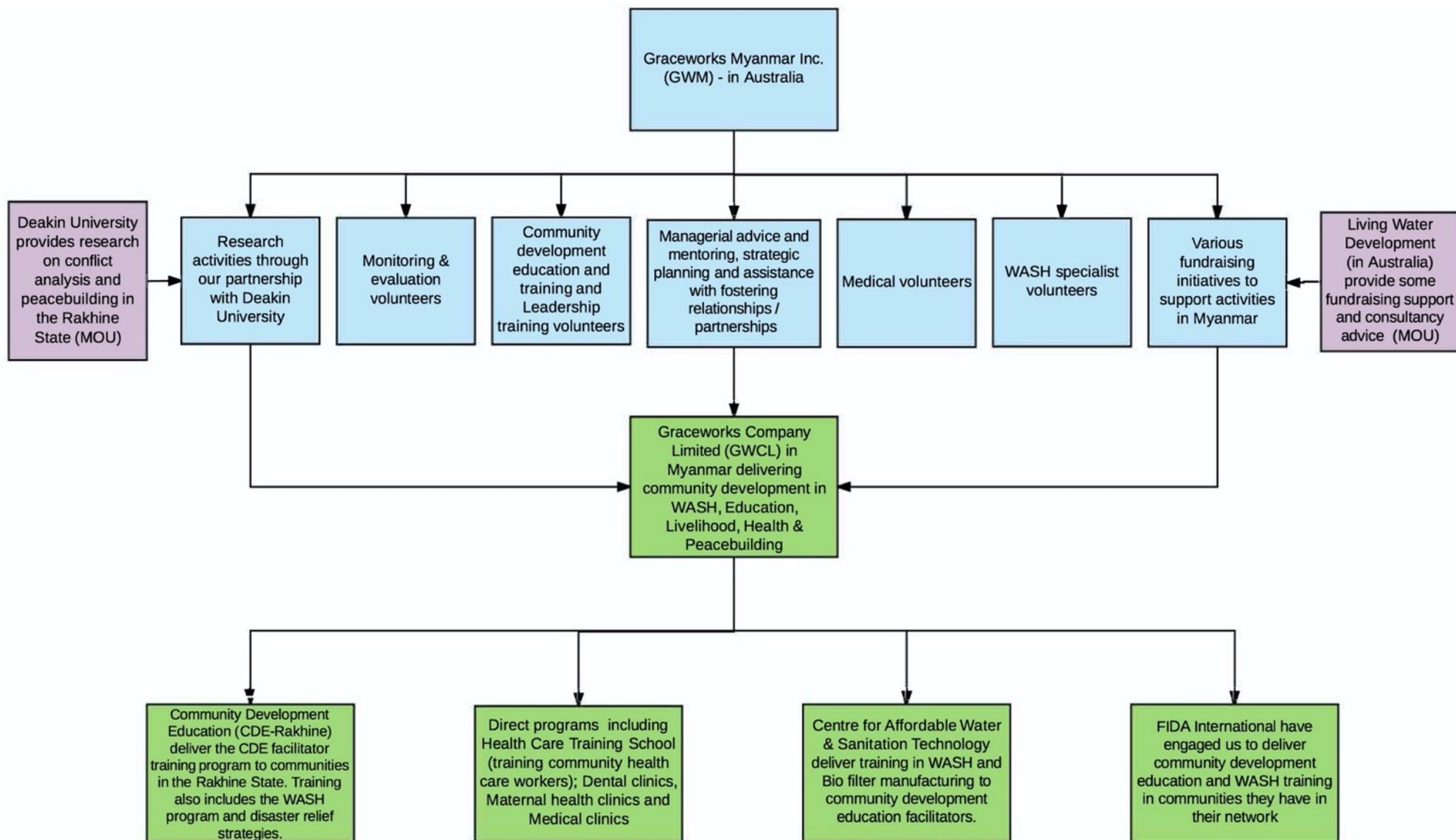
In the event of a board member position becoming vacant, a vote will be taken during the AGM to appoint a replacement board member, as nominated by current board and GWM members prior to the AGM. A two-thirds majority of the quorum present is required.

## Corporate flowchart

The corporate flowchart provided on page 7 shows the structure of GWM and how the two arms of GWM relate to one another within Australia and Myanmar.

The two arms of GWM are GraceWorks Myanmar Inc. (GWM) in Australia and GraceWorks Company Limited in Myanmar (GWCL).

# Organisational chart





## CASE STUDY

### The power of advocacy

A village in Rakhine – a 2-hour drive from the state capital, Sittwe – was one of many villages struggling with poor infrastructure, especially during the rainy season, impacting trade, access to health care, children’s education and more.

Through advocacy training and the initiation of road building via our CDE work, for this village, the struggle is over. Villagers gained the skills and confidence needed to approach the local government for financial support. The process was led by a young, female CDE facilitator and resulted in the government providing materials to build proper roads in the village. The government was impressed with what they saw and expressed willingness to support future development projects.

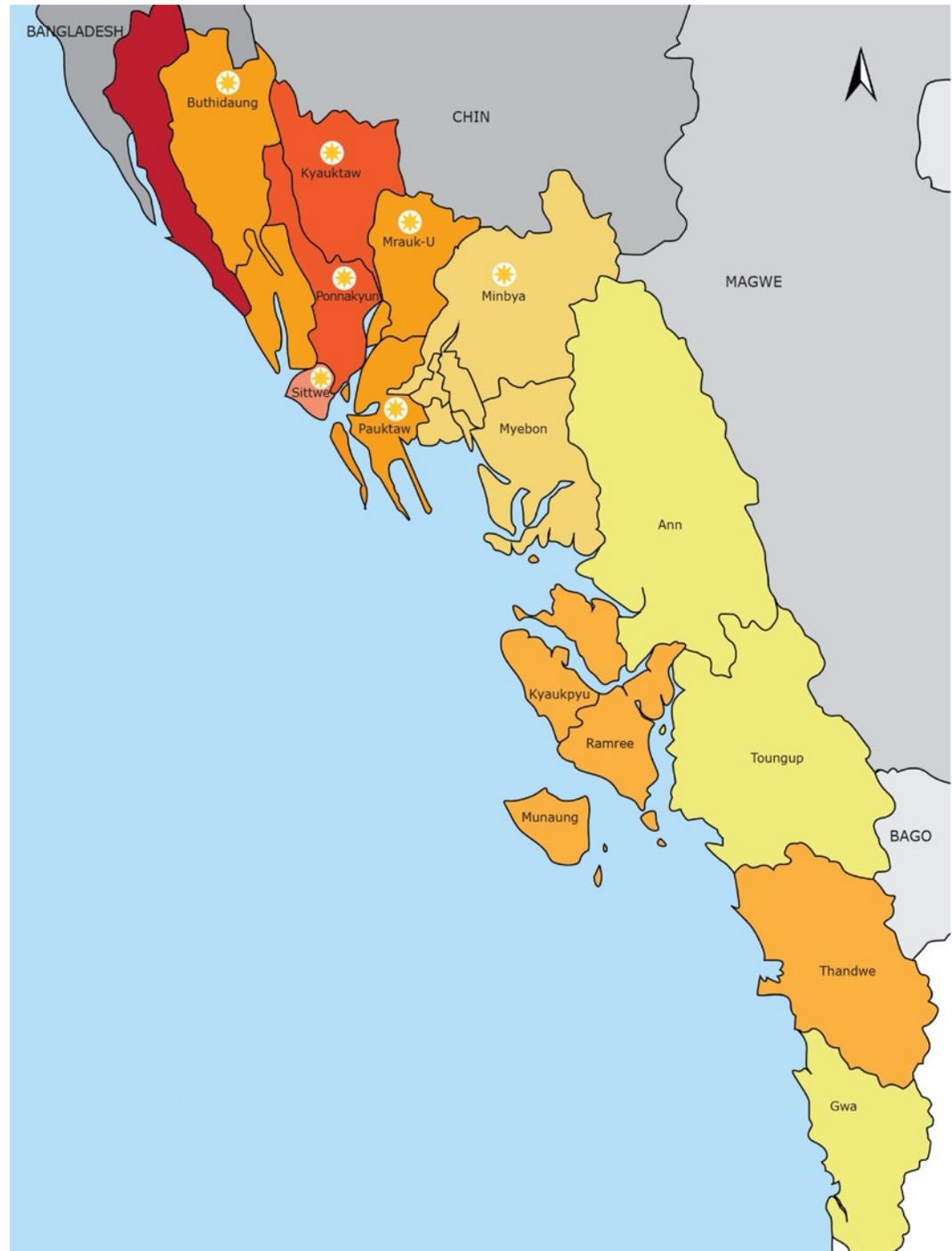
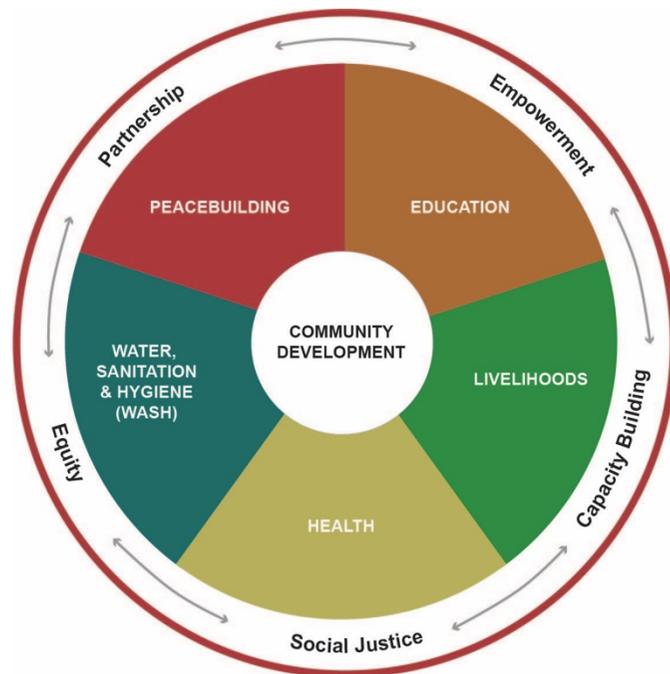
Now, students and workers can travel all the way to Sittwe by motorbike, and produce and fish can be transported to markets outside the village, benefiting the local economy. The community previously felt they didn’t have a voice or confidence, so never asked the government for support. Advocacy training and community-based project planning and implementation changed their mindsets.

# Impact – scope

GWM is a community development organisation focused on delivering lasting, grassroots development support to local partner organisations and sustainability to local communities in Myanmar.

During the year, we intentionally focused our work in the five key areas of peacebuilding; education; livelihoods; health; and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

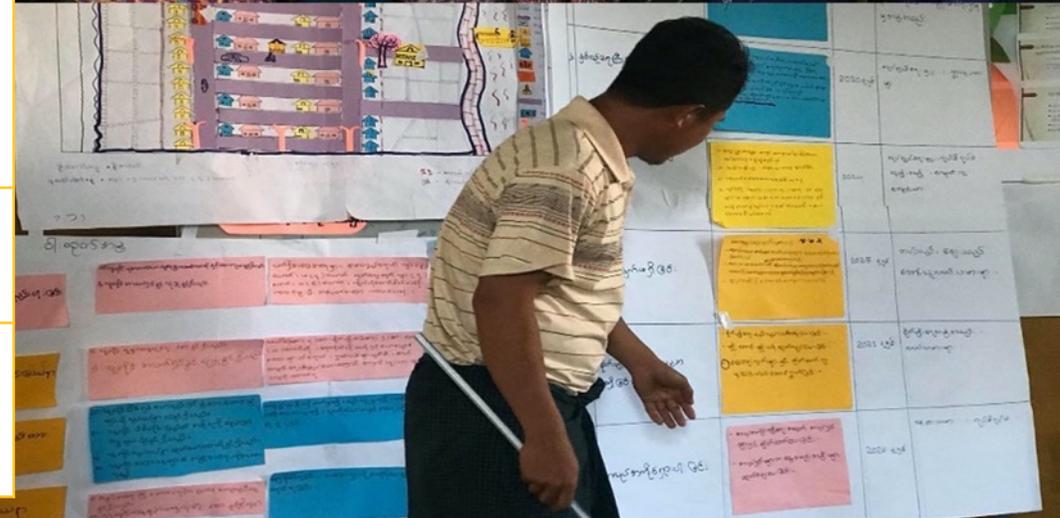
GWM currently has programs or projects in Rakhine State (primary) and Yangon Division. The map highlights the current locations where we have full-time CDE facilitators in Rakhine State.



# Impact – projects

GWM continued to deliver major, multi-year projects/programs in Rakhine State in addition to our health work in Yangon.

Program/project	Focus	Impact
Community Development Education, Rakhine State (ended Mar 2020)	CDE training for village facilitators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 10 facilitators supported</li> <li>✓ 61 villages (across 7 townships) directly and indirectly reached</li> </ul>
Building Peace and Capacity through CDE, Rakhine State (since Mar 2020)	CDE training including arts-based peacebuilding for new CDE villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 12 facilitators supported</li> <li>✓ 24 villages included (paired Muslim and Buddhist villages)</li> <li>✓ 40,806 people directly and 51,230 people indirectly benefitted</li> </ul>
Building Cultural Bridges, Rakhine State – ActionAid-led consortium (since Jan 2020)	Training in arts and peacebuilding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ GWM shared training with consortium members</li> <li>✓ GWM facilitators gained access to new specialist training and events</li> </ul>
Life Saving Water, Rakhine State (since Mar 2018)	WASH training for villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 7 people trained</li> <li>✓ 1,600 people directly benefitted</li> </ul>
Health program, Yangon Division (ongoing project based on needs assessments)	Medical clinic and sonography training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 1 training course run</li> <li>✓ 78 people supported through the clinic</li> </ul>



# Peacebuilding and education

During the year, our CDE program in Rakhine State incorporated a strong component of arts-based peacebuilding. Around every six months, specialist consultants provided arts-based training to CDE facilitators in areas such as:

- Widening narrow, hardened conflict identities toward more inclusive ones
- Encouraging empowerment around what people can influence
- Engaging people in the difficult work of promoting social harmony.

The arts form an integral part of everyday human life, providing pleasure and space outside the routines in which we learn, explore, reflect and grow. That is why arts activities offer crucial contributions to community development. They ensure development incorporates enhanced quality of life across all domains while teaching important skills such as creative problem-solving, cooperative communal negotiation of sensitive issues, and critical thinking. Evidence collected from our team's direct research shows small but highly significant shifts in attitudes and reported behaviours among the majority of facilitators,

as well as creative applications of their newfound knowledge and skills in resolving conflicts within and between communities.

Further research by specialist consultants also identified several instances of Buddhist villages reaching out to Muslim neighbours to re-establish inter-communal ties cut off during the August 2017 violence. One facilitator reported conducting peacebuilding training in his community where a businesswoman became excited in realising that universal human rights apply to her Muslim neighbours, meaning that doing business with them was not only legitimate, but important for protecting their human rights. She committed to engaging with them directly in future trade relationships. Another Buddhist project village reported that villagers had already re-opened a marketplace shared with their Muslim neighbours, while a third community reported Buddhist and Muslim youth playing sport together each evening.

*Community harmony training with Muslim and Buddhist community members as part of our work in strengthening the formation of everyday peace through arts programming*



# Peacebuilding and education

Our direct research, research by specialist consultants, and further research into Myanmar's Rohingya conflict, all culminated in the preparation of a research paper, *Understanding & Responding to Conflict in Rakhine State: Conflict analysis & conflict sensitive strategic program advice for GraceWorks Myanmar (GWM)*.

It also contributed to CDE program adaptations to better incorporate the strengthening of 'everyday peace' formation. Over the last several years, consultants have adapted theoretical concepts of everyday peace into what is now a world-first application for practical training. Today, CDE is actively promoting this strengthening of everyday peace formation through a refined and integrated program of arts activities.

Traditional peacebuilding approaches typically focus on the minority of people who visibly promote harmony, ignoring the potential benefits of supporting those who may lack the confidence to openly promote non-violence. By refusing to actively join in violence, they are the people who are contributing to a preliminary form of peace. In making CDE facilitators aware of ways they can promote non-violence, and in networking facilitators' efforts to do so, CDE has the potential to contribute to more sustainable forms of inter-communal engagement and cooperation. Networking communities via our training, for example, highlights that they are not alone, and strengthens their empowerment to model peace in local contexts.

*A community building project – jointly building a roadway in a Muslim village*



# Peacebuilding and education

More broadly, in the latest round of our multi-year CDE work, week-long training was held for 12 village facilitators in Sittwe, representing multiple villages. Following their community development and peacebuilding training, when they returned to their villages, they began to implement the information they had learned. This cohort was different to previous groups. Being from Buddhist villages, this time they were paired with a neighbouring Muslim village and tasked to build/rejuvenate relationships between the two villages.

In the early months of the project, facilitators and residents of each set of paired villages had all conducted village awareness meetings and started planning community projects. In addition, several Buddhist and Muslim villages had completed seed projects including building platforms and stairs down to drinking ponds, roads and bridges, wells, and amenities (eg a community toilet).

In these early days, most projects involved Buddhists and Muslims working separately. However, there were increasing attempts to work together. In one set of paired villages, residents from the two villages decided to build a mutually beneficial footbridge. When it came to doing the work, the Muslim residents became suspicious and said they would not help unless they were paid. The facilitator explained the idea behind these projects and the value in residents from both villages helping each other. Although the Muslim village members remained hesitant, the Buddhist village members completed the bridge and still encouraged the Muslims to use it as a goodwill gesture. The Muslim villagers came to realise their neighbours' good intentions and agreed to work together on future projects.

*CDE training in progress*



# Peacebuilding and education

In early 2020, to encourage and strengthen this community-led development, village facilitators attended training on how to compile, maintain and use a 'village book'. The village book is a practical, community-owned and driven tool that helps prompt discussions on people's needs and dreams. It then supports the creation of development plans to realise those needs and dreams. Once a village records the situation in their village and develops plans, the village book then becomes a tool that villagers can use to engage with, and hold, local government and themselves accountable. Further discussion and exploration of the effectiveness of this training and village book artefacts will be part of future evaluations.

Another recent addition to the CDE project is a specialist Burmese, female peacebuilding facilitator. This role began in March 2020 and was filled by an alumnus of a previous iteration of the CDE project.

The specialist peacebuilder's role is to travel between villages and support the work of the resident facilitator located in each village pair. The efficacy and productivity of this role will also be included in the next evaluation.

In previous years, the external evaluation of our CDE work has been led by Caucasian foreigners. While these external evaluators have been technically competent, context-sensitive and knowledgeable about community development praxis, sourcing expertise from outside Myanmar detracts from our grassroots community development approach. Building local capability is a focus of ours.

*Part of GWM's CDE program is an awareness seminar that offers an introduction to CDE through a training program – a process our facilitators undertake when they are invited into a new village – with this photo showing the recognition of our CDE awareness seminar graduates (the photo is a representative image from 2018 due to limited access during FY1920)*





## CASE STUDY

### Village book training

A village book is a practical tool for bottom-up, people-centred development. It captures the social, economic and demographic situation of a village, insight on the most excluded groups and their vulnerability, and common social and cultural practices. Information is sourced from a community using processes owned by a community. Village books provide micro-level development plans based on people's expressed needs and dreams. They are used by communities to prepare village development plans and engage others in coordinating, advocating for and being accountable for development activities. Plans can be integrated with a local government's plans. The village book process is a dynamic one of continual review and updating as a community acts and an environment changes.

For our CDE facilitators, the village book process helps them guide community members through participatory and inclusive analysis and planning. GWM partnered with ActionAid Myanmar in early 2020 to conduct village book training in Rakhine State with 16 participants. One said, "this training ignites me in how important [the village book] is for...village development...[and] can feed into township development plans, leading to state/regional and, ultimately, national development plans".

# Livelihoods



GWM's work in the area of livelihoods through the year has been indirect, with numerous village communities selecting CDE projects designed to support livelihoods, such as improved bridges and roads, and to improve livelihoods, such as agricultural initiatives.

While GWM's CDE work was able to continue throughout the year, despite the impacts of COVID-19, our team elected not to progress specific livelihoods initiatives beyond those stemming from CDE work.



# Health

As an example of our ongoing health clinic work, in November 2019, we ran a maternal health clinic on Seikkyi Island, south west of Yangon for pregnant women who have no easy access to ultrasound imaging, due to their socioeconomic status. All were referred by the local midwife who also attended to observe.

Educational videos on pregnancy and nutrition (in Burmese) were shown, reinforcing the teaching these women receive from the midwife to further improve health outcomes. Basic medical histories and checks, using blood pressure and blood glucose investigations, were also performed by GWM's doctor.

The women all received an optional obstetric ultrasound to determine maternal and foetal health – establishing an accurate gestational age and screening for possible complications, such as placental and umbilical cord positions, multiple fetuses and breech presentation. The scans, performed by an Australian sonographer, were also used as training for the local midwife and a junior radiologist.

Some pregnancies were found to be differing in the estimated delivery dates. The scans also helped to identify high-risk pregnancies where delivery on the island was not ideal due to the increased possibility of mother and/or child mortality without intervention. Six of the women were identified as needing close monitoring and hospital evaluation for the remainder of their pregnancies – low-lying placentas were found in three women, and low amniotic fluid levels in the other three women.

The midwife was given the ultrasound reports and made aware of those in need of follow up and referral to the Central Women's Hospital in Yangon for the rest of their pregnancies. The midwife reported that all pregnancies from the high-risk group had positive outcomes of healthy mothers and children.



*Health care workers receiving sonography training*



# WASH



Our primary focus in relation to WASH is the manufacturing of bio-sand filters in Rakhine State. WASH is a vital element of the CDE program, and our facilitators have been trained in WASH by the Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology (CAWST) – a Canadian-based organisation with a footprint around the world.

GWM has a consultancy arm in Sittwe, Rakhine State, for the WASH program where outside agencies and organisations can receive information and training, and ultimately purchase bio-sand filters from GWM. Ongoing training is also provided for the hygiene element of WASH, including toilets being installed in villages.

Our facilitators consistently receive positive feedback from community members. Through the training process, our people support them in making around two filters per mould per day (refer to the process on page 19). As an example, in one five-day training round, 50 filters were made. The feedback on water quality is also excellent.

The filters are based on a robust, simple technology that can be operated without electricity, constructed with locally available materials and labor, and maintained by local stakeholders with the aid of training.

# BIO-SAND FILTER PROCESS



**Making the filter**



**Checking stones for the cement**



**Mixing the cement and stones**



**Processing the mix**



**Moulding the filter**



**Producing a bio-sand filter**



**Testing the water before pouring into the filter**



## CASE STUDY

### Life-saving WASH

Safe drinking water is important as people are vulnerable to water-borne diseases. People with low income have a challenging context for the provision of safe water in Rakhine State, the poorest state in the country. In 2016, GWM designed and began implementing a bio-sand filter program to improve water quality in Rakhine State...

Since 2016, I have been using the bio-sand filters for my family and the children whom we are taking care of at the centre in Sittwe. We have sustained access to safe drinking water. All of us, including the children, have become healthy and water-borne diseases have drastically reduced... We can save money as we do not need to spend it on the treatment of the diseases affected by unclean drinking water...

In some villages in central/northern Rakhine State, these filters are effectively being used as villagers experience the benefits of using the filters... It can be described as life-saving water.

*-Edited from a trainee letter*



## CASE STUDY

### *Awash with quality water*

In northern Rakhine State, the quality of water is not good. It also floods very often during the rainy season, making the water dirty. It affects the whole life of every family member living in undeveloped rural areas. The unclean water leads to vulnerability for all – adults and children. As there is no sustained access to safe drinking water, villagers suffer from diseases/infections from the dirty water. Frequent visits to the village clinic then increase our daily expenses. Sometimes people die of diarrhoea and dysentery linked to the unclean water.

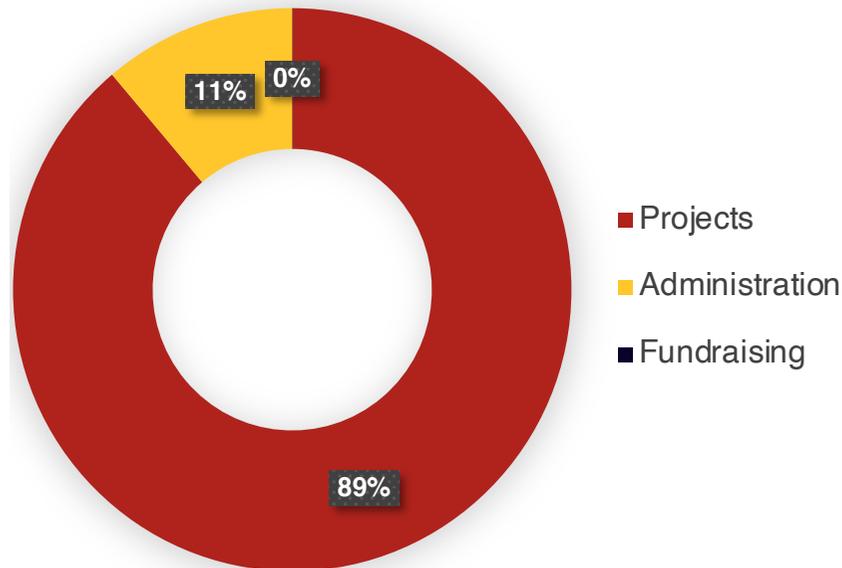
In 2016, bio-sand filters were introduced to our village by GWM. In the beginning, I was hesitant to believe in the water quality. The trainers well explained the benefits. Since my family started using the filters, we realised water-related diseases reduced remarkably. We now have sustained access to safe drinking water, which impacts healthy life and reduces expenses from health issues. In the first year of using the filters, water-borne disease impacts reduced by 50% compared to previous years. Now it is even less. Sustained access to safe drinking water is important to all.

*-Edited from a trainee letter*

# Financial report



## 2019/2020 expenditure on revenue



## Board declaration

The Board of GraceWorks Myanmar Inc states that the accompanying concise financial report is presented fairly in accordance with applicable Australian Accounting Standards and is consistent with the Association's 30 June 2020 financial report. In the 30 June 2020 financial report, the Board declares that the financial statements are special purpose financial statements prepared to satisfy the financial reporting requirement of the Associations Incorporations Act of Victoria and the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission. The Board has determined that the association is not a reporting entity. The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis. They are based on historic costs and do not take into account changing money values or, except where stated specifically, current valuations of non-current assets. The financial statements and notes give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2020 and performance of the association for the year then ended. In the Board's opinion, there are reasonable grounds to believe that GraceWorks Myanmar Inc will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable. This statement has been made in accordance with a resolution of the Board.

**Ronnie Faggotter**, Chairperson

**Peter Simmons**, CEO

**Des Collinson**, Treasurer

# Income statement and statement of financial position



INCOME STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020		
	2020 (\$)	2019
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Donations and gifts	7,908	37,358
Grants	346,138	344,083
Other income	-	-
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>354,046</b>	<b>381,441</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Program expense		
Funds to international programs	218,459	145,105
Program to support costs	63,235	119,233
Community education expense	-	-
Fundraising expense	-	-
Accountability and administration expense	140,206	48,717
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>421,900</b>	<b>313,055</b>
Excess/(Shortfall) of revenue over expenditure	(67,854 )	68,386

*GWM manages accounts on a cash basis. An excess or shortfall in revenue over expenditure relates to the timing of grant income received versus transfer of allocations made to Myanmar.*

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2020		
	2020 (\$)	2019
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	16,761	75,055
Trade and other receivables	6,826	5,349
Other	20	569
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>23,607</b>	<b>80,973</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	7,500	7,500
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>7,500</b>	<b>7,500</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>31,107</b>	<b>88,473</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Trade and other payables	22,465	9,712
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>22,465</b>	<b>9,712</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>22,465</b>	<b>9,712</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>8,642</b>	<b>78,761</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Retained surpluses/(deficits)	8,642	78,761
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>8,642</b>	<b>78,761</b>



 [info@gwm.org.au](mailto:info@gwm.org.au)

 [graceworksmyanmar.org.au](http://graceworksmyanmar.org.au)

**Australia**

PO Box 29, Leopold, Vic, 3224

**Myanmar (Yangon)**

142A, 5th Floor, Lower Kyimyindine Road  
Ahlone Township 11121, Yangon

**Myanmar (Rakhine State)**

1/22 (36) North Sanpya Street, Pyidawtha Ward  
Sittwe Township, Rakhine State