

Karenni Refugee Camp 1

Education Situation

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Foreword

In Karenni Refugee Camp 1, literacy in Karenni, English and Burmese are important. There are 20 sections in Karenni Refugee Camp 1. There are many different ethnic groups living in every section. All of their languages are connected. Most people know Karenni, Burmese and some English. The ethnic groups are Kachin, Kayah, Karen, Burmese, Rakhine, Shan, Pa-Oh, Kayan and Kayaw. Each ethnic group has their own language and literacy. Some ethnic group's languages are similar to Karenni language so they use Karenni language. Therefore, Karenni Language is important to know for ethnic groups. The main languages used in the media and magazines in Karenni Refugee Camp 1 are Karenni, Burmese and English. Therefore, we should teach the students these three languages because they are important to know.

Introduction

We are students at Karenni Social Development Center from June to March, in Karenni Refugee Camp 1. In October, we collected information and researched about education. After we got information, we produced this report. This report is kept in SDC school.

Purpose

In October 2013, SDC students have to do research. At our school, they teach about democracy, environment, rule of law, law and human rights. These subjects are connected to our topic. Therefore, we researched about this issue. The main purpose is research.



Houses in Karenni Refugee Camp 1

Educational background

On January 4th 1948, Burma got independence from the British. After Burma got independence, the Burmese government declared war on Karenni State. Since the civil war started, a lot of Karenni people have suffered. Many fled to Thailand in 1989. From 1990-1992, Karenni refugees had 3 primary schools, one middle school and one high school supported by Karenni Education Department (KnED). At the time, there were about 200 students and 15 teachers. In the school, they used textbooks and teacher's guides from Burma. Around 1996, a lot of Karenni refugees fled Burma and came to the camp. There were more students and teachers. Between 1997 and 2003, there were 5 Karenni refugee camps. KnED and JRS supported citizen's education. At the time, the population of students was 6,421. There were also 350 teachers. In 2003, camp 2 and camp 3 joined Karenni Refugee camp 1. Camp 4 and camp 5 were merged to become a new Karenni Refugee Camp 2. After that, there were 11 primary schools, 5 middle schools, two high schools and some post-10 schools.

Summary

In Karenni Refugee Camp 1, all of the schools focus on teaching Karenni, English and Burmese. These are the main 3 subjects taught in Karenni Refugee Camp 1. This report has collected the disadvantages of education in Karenni Refugee Camp 1. At the beginning in Karenni Refugee Camp 1, the teaching level was low so they wanted to change to improve Karenni people's education and make a benefit for them.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all teachers who gave us materials and training. We would also like to thank Teacher Than Nge for training us on how to collect information. Also we would like to thank the donors and Teacher Aung Sun Myint for giving us the opportunity to gain experience.

A summary of the location and history

The Karenni Refugee Camps are located on the Thai-Burma border. The population of the refugee camps is 25,000 people. The refugees have suffered and been forced into exile by the persecution of Burmese soldiers. The situation in their homeland was very poor so they had to leave to Thailand.

Education situation in Karenni Refugee Camp 1

There used to be 5 refugee camps. Now, Karenni Refugee Camp's 1, 2 and 3 have merged. Additionally, Karenni Refugees camps 4 and 5 have also merged. There are now 2 Karenni Refugee Camps.

In 2004, there were 8,000 students. Now, there are almost 10,000 students. Inside, there are a lot of young people who cannot study. Especially, a lot of children do not have an opportunity to receive education. Non-Governmental Organisations collect information on children who cannot study and write reports to the international community. Now, education is better in the refugee camps than inside Karenni State. NGOs help refugees to receive education in the camps. However, In Karenni Refugee Camp 1, they want to use their own guide books for lessons but they are not prepared so they use other temporary materials.



Students in a Refugee Camp 1 classroom

Now, they are using some very outdated textbooks. This is very frustrating for teachers. Some teachers say that we should change these textbooks. Currently, the Consortium and KnED prepare a social curriculum for Grade 1 to Grade 4.



The aim of Karenni National Education

- 1. Karenni National Education needs to have secondary, college and university level education.
- 2. Karenni literacy and culture needs to be taught at secondary, college and university level.
- 3. Karenni nationals need to be free to manage; and have human rights and democracy.

Literature review

Basic education guidelines should be available to teachers. In a country, education guidelines that target the role of education are very important for success. We have seen educational and country objectives are interdependent. In Burma, the goal of education is for every teacher to carry out their responsibilities to be successful.

Education guidelines are for achieving education goals. Teachers should practice other knowledge as well as school subjects for students. In Burma, teachers must follow the textbook entirely as part of their teaching guidelines.

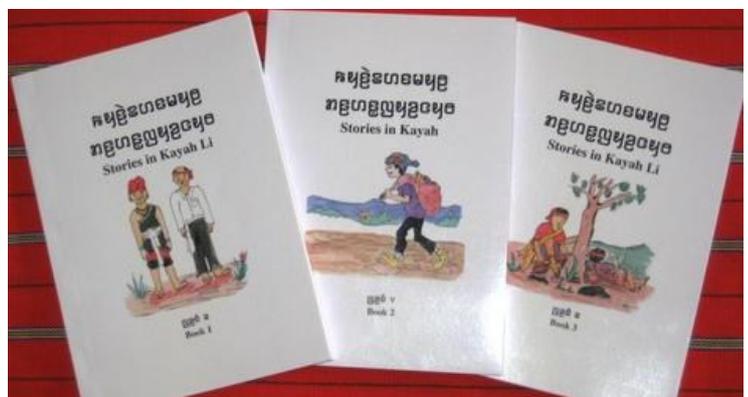
We have seen information from Fuller (1987) to be successful:

- 1. Management and guidelines
- 2. To train children at pre-school level
- 3. To have libraries and activities
- 4. To include materials for teaching and books for increasing knowledge in libraries

If there are enough materials to teach and use, then our education will be better than countries with more technology. However, in Karenni Refugee Camp 1 every school does not have enough textbooks and materials. Therefore, it is difficult for students to learn and teachers to teach.

Curriculum

For teachers who use textbooks, there are positives and negatives. Everywhere in Burma, people’s living standard is dependent on their income level. When teachers teach students, the level they teach depends on the student’s situation. In Karenni areas, some teachers have not received teacher training. Teaching staff are also always changing. Therefore their knowledge is not sufficient. If they have guidelines, they are very helpful for them. Guidelines are very helpful for teachers who have not received training.



Books for learning Karenni produced by the Karenni Literacy Center

In the Karenni Refugee Camps, all subjects do not have teacher guidelines. It is difficult for the teachers who do not have training. KnED cannot produce guidelines. Karenni Community College (KNCC) students have learned many subjects so they have knowledge. However, when they go to teach they do not have guidelines so it is difficult for them. Some teachers don't have time to prepare their lessons because they have families so they have to look after their children and cook. Also, some of them don't have enough knowledge so it is very difficult for them to teach. KnCC students have completed their schooling. They have a lot of knowledge but when they come back to teach, they don't have effective teaching skills. If we have guidelines to teach, we can have a teaching direction together. Therefore, we can achieve our goal.

Lesson preparation

Every teacher should prepare before they teach by looking at what they will teach and ensuring they understand it very well. If teachers don't prepare and they have training they will understand. However, if they don't have training they won't know their subject.

We have four steps to lesson preparation.

1. The first step is objectives. Before teaching, every teacher should check what they will teach and make notes to summarize what they will teach and how it connects to their subject. They should also use examples so students can understand how it connects. If they do like this, there will be a good effect for students and teachers.
2. The second step is testing. Tests can show student's situation and how much they know. Another method is for teacher's to ask student's questions.
3. The third step is for teachers to limit the amount of material they will use for their lesson. Teachers should prepare many examples to explain and help their students to understand. When they are thinking of examples, they should make notes and summarise. Their teaching style should depend upon their student's ability.
4. The fourth step is to use quizzes. Quizzes can be used after lessons. They can also be used during lessons. Next, if teachers want to know their student's situation, they can collect attendance. Also, every week they can make a quiz so they can know their student's situation and how much they have improved.

Primary school level

The compulsory subjects are Karenni, mathematics, basic Burmese, basic English and Social studies (grade 2 to grade 4).

The additional subjects are health, physical education and arts. These additional subjects do not include an examination.

Middle school level

The compulsory subjects are Karenni, Basic Mathematics, Basic Burmese, Basic English, geography, basic science and history.

The additional subjects are vocational. These vocational subjects are just practical skills.

High school level

The compulsory subjects are basic mathematics, Burmese, English, Geography, Science, South East Asian History and General Science studies.

Weekly timetable

Primary School (Hours per subject per week)

	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4
Karenni	6	6	5	5	5
English	5	5	5	5	5
Burmese	7	7	5	5	5
Mathematics	7	7	7	7	7
Social Health	-	-	2 - 3	2 - 3	2 - 3
Art	2	2	2	2	2
Music	3	3	2	2	2
Physical Education	3	3	2	2	2
Library	2	2	2	2	2

Middle and high school (Hours per subject per week)

	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10
Karenni	4	4	4	4	-	-
English	5	5	5	5	8	10
Burmese	5	5	5	4	-	-
Mathematics	6	6	6	6	8	5
Geography	4	4	4	4	5	5
History	4	4	4	4	5	5
Science	5	5	5	4	6	6
Vocational	-	-	-	3	-	-
Social Studies	1	1	1	1	3	2
Li	1	1	1	1	-	-

Recommendations

To School teachers and KnED supervisors,

Teachers in Karenni Refugee Camp 1 change subjects year by year so they do not know the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects. A few teachers know the specifics of their subject. However some teachers have less understanding. Therefore, we would like to recommend KnED to make sure they can retain teachers and keep stability within their organisation. They should keep teaching one subject for a long time. They don't need to change to another subject. Additionally, KnED staff need to organise teacher trainings including ceremonies.

Books to be prepared for the future

Schools in Karenni Refugee Camp 1 need to change textbooks for the future. Many students need pictures in their books so the teachers can explain the subjects clearly for all students. Supervisors need to separate the textbooks for teachers and students. Teachers must persuade students to participate when the teachers are teaching about subjects. Each lesson is 45 minutes so teachers must prepare their lesson for this length of time. They need to write down the purpose of each subject.

Teacher's salary problem

Teachers in Karenni Refugee Camp 1 don't have enough salary so they face a lot of challenges. Many people request an increase in salary. People who have families face more problems. They say there is not enough salary to support their family. Mostly, head teachers hear the other teachers say that the salary is not high enough. Teachers change jobs because the salary is not enough for them. In different schools, there are different salaries.



One teacher said that they shouldn't discriminate based on salary. All teachers are not equal but when they teach they are the same. One teacher said "When we go to teach students, we do the same. Why is our salary different? Education directors should assess all teachers so there is no wage discrimination"

All of the teachers are always changing year by year. This is really difficult for students and has a very serious impact on them.

Teacher's salary demands

1. In Karenni Refugee Camp 1, all of the teachers demand KnED to have a conversation with all teachers once a week. KnED needs to know about the teacher's and children's situation. They need to always study this issue. If the head of KnED, teacher Bu Reh, is not free, he can send other staff members.
2. Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) are supporting our Karenni Education but this is not enough. Other non-governmental organisations and governmental organisations need to support our teachers.
3. In Karenni Refugee Camp 1, all of the schools need to be beautiful. Plants and flowers need to be grown in the area around every school.
4. In Schools, they rotate teachers, every month. It affects the student's knowledge of their ability. They need to control and organise a stable teacher rotation.
5. In Karenni Refugee Camp 1, teachers need to teach more listening and writing skills in the class. KnED needs to support enough materials.

Preschool

In Karenni Refugee Camp 1, every section has a preschool. There are a maximum of 138 students in each preschool. They attend from the ages of 2-5 years. Preschool is supported by Karenni National Women's Organisation and Thai Burma Border Consortium. They support flannels, mosquito nets, nail clippers and other materials. Preschool teachers receive a salary of 900 baht a month. In preschool they teach subjects Monday to Friday. They teach the English alphabet on Mondays, Burmese alphabet on Tuesdays and Karenni alphabet on Wednesdays to Fridays. The Preschool teacher's responsibilities are to look after the children and the area around the school. The students have rest time from 10 am – 11 am. They also have break times for playing with toys and doing sport. Parents also come to school before the school closes to collect their children and carry them home. Some preschool children who are older can go home by themselves. Some children's mothers come to send their children to school as early as 6.00 am. Some parents send their children to school later. Preschool teachers and students have a good relationship.



The Karenni Alphabet



Education development

Comparing 2013 to previous years, there has been an improvement in camp education. All students are focused on studying hard. Also, now they can all wear uniforms and some can wear traditional shirts. Despite being poor, students have not given up on their studies. The students who stay at the boarding house away from their families usually work harder. Some of them have parents who can support them to go to school. Parents and teachers can participate with them. This year, all of the students were more excited and more interested during the lessons than in previous years. Student’s education situation is better than before and we hope in the future it can be better than now. Additionally, teachers hope for this too.

Conclusion

In the schools, most of the teachers use their mother tongue to teach students and also Burmese and other languages such as English. When they use different languages, it is better for a federal governmental system. Especially, when different ethnic groups are working with each other, language is important for everyone.

I believe in the future our country’s situation depends on our students. Students in Karenni State who cannot spend money for their education move to the refugee camp and receive support from NGOs.

In conclusion, KnED education organisation and education can protect and promote our language. They should also compare with other countries because this is really important.



Interviewees list

Interviewee Number	Name	Sex	Age	Ethnic group	Occupation	Date of interview
1	Mu Na	Female	27	Kayan	Teacher	14/10/2013
2	Baw Reh	Male	20	Kayah	Head Teacher	14/10/2013
3	Nge Meh	Female	20	Kayah	Teacher	14/10/2013
4	Ku Reh	Male	23	Kayah	Teacher	14/10/2013
5	Nye Reh	Male	25	Kayah	Teacher	14/10/2013
6	Hsa Paw	Female	22	Kayah	Teacher	15/10/2013
7	Le Le Paw	Female	12	Kayin	Student	14/10/2013
8	Teh Reh	Male	17	Kayah	Student	14/10/2013
9	Poe Meh	Female	14	Kayah	Student	14/10/2013
10	Naw Wa Kalo	Female	14	Kayin	Student	15/10/2013
11	Ai Po	Male	18	Shan	Student	15/10/2013
12	Ba Kay Lamin	Female	17	Baman	Student	16/10/2013
13	Sa Ka Moe	Male	18	Kayah	Student	16/10/2013
14	Rosie	Female	19	Kayin	Student	16/10/2013
15	Ba Meh	Female	21	Kayah	Teacher	14/10/2013
16	Kay Meh	Female	23	Kayah	Teacher	14/10/2013
17	Lee Meh	Female	25	Kayah	Teacher	14/10/2013
18	Neh Reh	Male	25	Kayah	Head Teacher	16/10/2013
19	Peh Reh	Male	19	Kayah	Student	16/10/2013
20	Ee Ee Tin	Female	32	Baman	KnED staff	23/10/2013



'The vision of Social Development Center is to promote the lives of the people who have suffered human rights abuses, to teach non-violent skills to build up a new society, to develop the rule of law, to value human dignity and to protect the environment.'



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If you are interested in volunteering with us, please email us at the same address: officesdc@yahoo.com. We accept volunteers for a minimum of three months.

Furthermore, if there is any other way you would like to provide us with support or assistance, please email us at the same address: officesdc@yahoo.com.

Visit us at: http://sdcthailand.wordpress.com

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- Mote Oo Education

We would also like to thank anyone who has volunteered with our organization now or in the past.

Finally, we would like to thank you the reader for showing an interest in supporting the cause of our people with your support we can go from strength to strength in the future.

Thank you!



The Curriculum Project

