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# Euro-Burma Office

Working to promote democracy in Burma

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# **Euro-Burma Office**

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## **Working to promote democracy in Burma**

REPORT ON OVER A DECADE OF ACTIVITIES

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**About us**



# Introduction

**Euro-Burma Office (EBO)** in Brussels is the operations centre of the Associates to Develop Democratic Burma Inc (ADDB), a Canadian not-for-profit corporation.

EBO was established in 1997 with support from the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), and the Burmese democracy movement.

## The aims of EBO are to:

- ➡ Help the Burmese democracy movement prepare for a transition to democracy, and
- ➡ Keep the international community informed about Burma.

**E**BO has been funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) – directly, and through the Olof Palme International Center, the Danish International Development Agency (Danida) through the Danish Burma Committee, the European Commission, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) through Canadian Lutheran World Relief, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trocaire (Ireland), Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, the Norwegian Burma Council, the Institute for Public Administration (Ireland), Evangelische Missionswerks, the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, the National Endowment for Democracy (USA), People in Need (Czech Republic) and the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB).

The **Associates to Develop Democratic Burma Inc** was founded in 1990 and incorporated in 1994 in Canada.

## The objectives of the ADDB are to:

- a** Restore democracy and respect for human rights in Burma.
- b** Encourage and enable all in Burma to participate in the democratic process.
- c** Facilitate the development of democratic values and traditions in Burma.
- d** Monitor and continue to promote democracy in Burma in the post-dictatorship era.
- e** Help future governments and the Burmese public consider, analyze and formulate social, economic and other policies critical to a democracy.

The ADDB was initially funded by membership fees and the Canadian International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (now *Rights & Democracy*).

## Activities of the EBO over the past 13 years have included:

- a** Strategic analyses, policy briefings and recommendations, and news updates;
- b** Support for intra- and inter-ethnic political consultations to resolve conflicts (principally through the National Reconciliation Programme - NRP);
- c** Support for broad-based political infrastructures to develop common strategies and priorities (principally through the NRP);
- d** Support for a primary database to enable the planning of a comprehensive human resources development programme;
- e** Support for internships and capacity building programmes;
- f** Support for media and information projects.

## Priority target groups of the EBO have included:

- ➡ Political parties, political activists and organizations;
- ➡ Civil society and community-based organizations;
- ➡ The international community especially the United Nations and relevant governments.

Within each of the groups identified, the EBO has paid special attention to disenfranchised communities, in particular, women, youth, ethnic minorities and religious minorities.

Domestic (within the Burmese community) and international advocacy components are integrated into all areas of EBO's activities.





# Conceptual Framework

EBO works on the basis that development (poverty eradication), human rights and security (peace) are all intertwined and interdependent. One cannot be achieved without the other.

“The world must advance the causes of security, development and human rights together, otherwise none will succeed. Humanity will not enjoy security without development, it will not enjoy development without security, and it will not enjoy either without respect for human rights.”

➔ **Kofi Annan**  
*In larger freedom:  
 towards development,  
 security and human  
 rights for all*  
 Secretary-General  
 UN, 2005

This statement by Kofi Annan reflects the growing consensus that human rights and poverty eradication are inextricably linked. In the past, human rights and development cooperation tended to be approached by different actors through different strategies and policies. NGOs themselves traditionally split into two different categories - those promoting human rights (most of them focusing on individual civil rights and democratisation) and those involved in development cooperation work. Since the collapse of the “bi-polar world” at the end of twentieth century these two areas of work have increasingly begun to overlap, acknowledging that human rights, individual as well as collective (political & civil, as well as social, cultural and economic rights), are at the heart of democratic transformation, as well as poverty eradication.

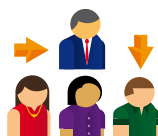
A rights-based approach creates a framework for a more inclusive, participatory way of doing development, and highlighting the

accountability of governments and other development actors to fulfil obligations and responsibilities towards their citizens according to international commitments<sup>1</sup>.

EBO is deeply aware of the benefits of this approach and although the focus of its work is on democratization, peace and reconciliation and good governance, it recognizes the importance of creating policy that is coherent with those working towards poverty alleviation in Burma. Therefore, EBO sees itself as a bridge between the development world and actors working towards democracy and human rights, knowing that both parties are essential to the achievement of a long-term transition to democracy in Burma, where the citizens of Burma will be free from want, fear and discrimination, *including a holistic approach to human rights in its own activities and priorities.*

<sup>1</sup> — Taken from CONCORD's Rights-based approach subgroup, discussion paper on a rights-based approach to development, June 2006

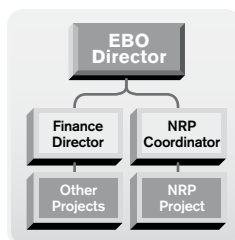




# Funding Structure of EBO activities

ABOUT US

In the beginning, the overall EBO programme was managed as follows:

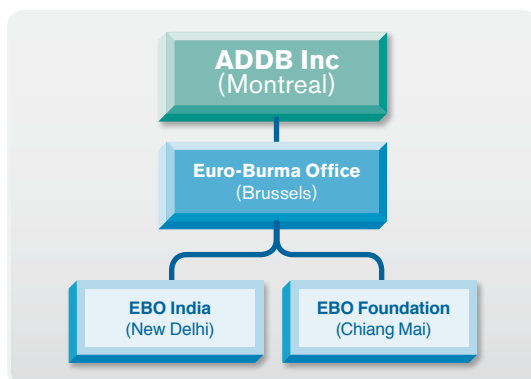


the NRP to EBO for funding. In the same way, less politically sensitive projects and those that were 'reconciling' in nature were referred by EBO to the NRP for funding.

A major difference between the two was that the NRP published all its guidelines and requirements, while EBO did not, although they were essentially the same. The NRP funding decision process was and continues to be very transparent and accountable through its 18-member Programme Committee of stakeholders, which makes all of its decisions public. The EBO decision process was not formally recorded (for security reasons) although a large number of stakeholders were consulted informally.

Another difference was that while NRP had dedicated project and administrative staff in Thailand to monitor and report on NRP activities, EBO did not have the same level of staffing due to concerns about high overheads in Europe. This sometimes led to a less-than-satisfactory reporting process for EBO direct funded projects.

To reflect the increasing complexities in programming, administration and security, it became necessary and prudent to review the management structure and administrative capacity of EBO. In response, the management and administrative structures were re-organised as follows:



Both National Reconciliation Programme (NRP) and EBO projects followed the same guidelines and had the same reporting requirements. Projects that could not be funded through the NRP process either because they did not fall within the mandate of the NRP or were more politically sensitive (security conditions due to implementation inside Burma), were referred by

## EURO-BURMA OFFICE: A COORDINATED STRUCTURE

Associates to Develop Democratic Burma, Inc (ADDB) in Canada is the legal headquarters of EBO. Board meetings and annual general meetings of the members of ADDB usually take place in Canada. There are currently 18 members of ADDB, of which 5 represent the board.

### ➔ The office in Brussels

The administrative centre of EBO is based in Brussels. It provides information to the international community through its website (daily news, briefing papers and political analyses). It also coordinates donor funding for projects which take place in Burma or on its borders. It assists and supports Burmese organisations to lobby the European Institutions when needed. It facilitates EBO analysis and research.

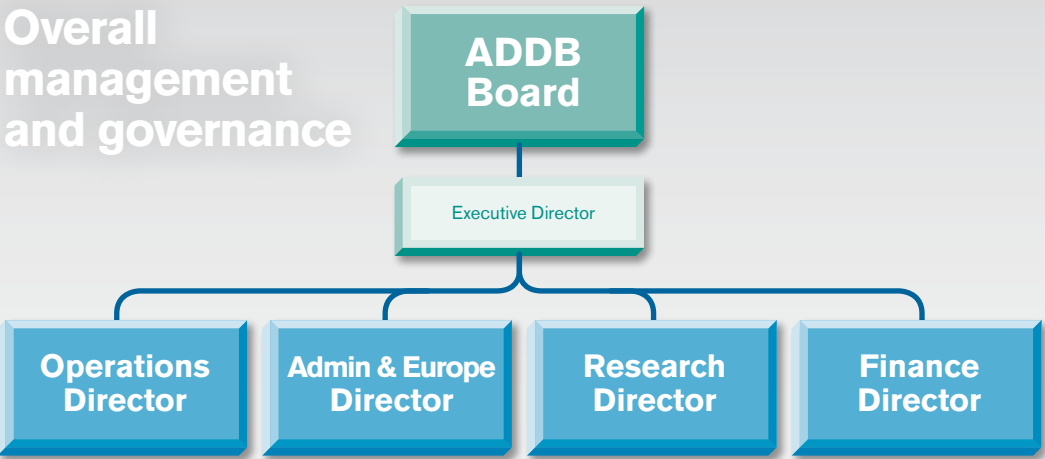
### ➔ The office in New Delhi

EBO India became functional on 1 January 2007 and is based in New Delhi. EBO India develops contacts with Members of Parliament (MPs), politicians, bureaucrats, academics, journalists and activists in India. EBO India also disseminates information by sending out EBO analyses and briefing papers, as well as relevant statements by other Burmese organizations. The office has also facilitated visits to India for the ENC and other organisations such as the Women's League of Chinland, Burma Online Library, Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust, Burma Assist, and Dutch Young Socialists. EBO India also works on research activities such as giving talks, as well as meeting with researchers, students, filmmakers, etc.

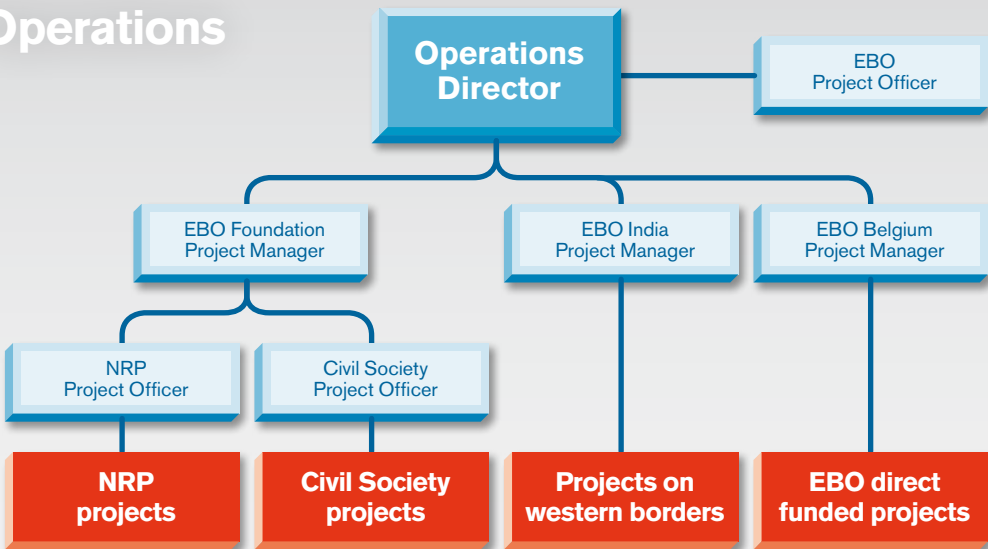
### ➔ The office in Chiang Mai

In Chiang Mai, the EBO has an administrative role along with project coordination with project implementers. The aim of the office in Thailand is to collect narrative and financial reports from project partners and ensure they are correct and can be reported to donors. It also aims to make sure that all the decisions of the various programme committees are adhered to, and that donor requirements are met. The project managers and officers are also in charge of monitoring projects and making sure that the funds are spent according to plan.

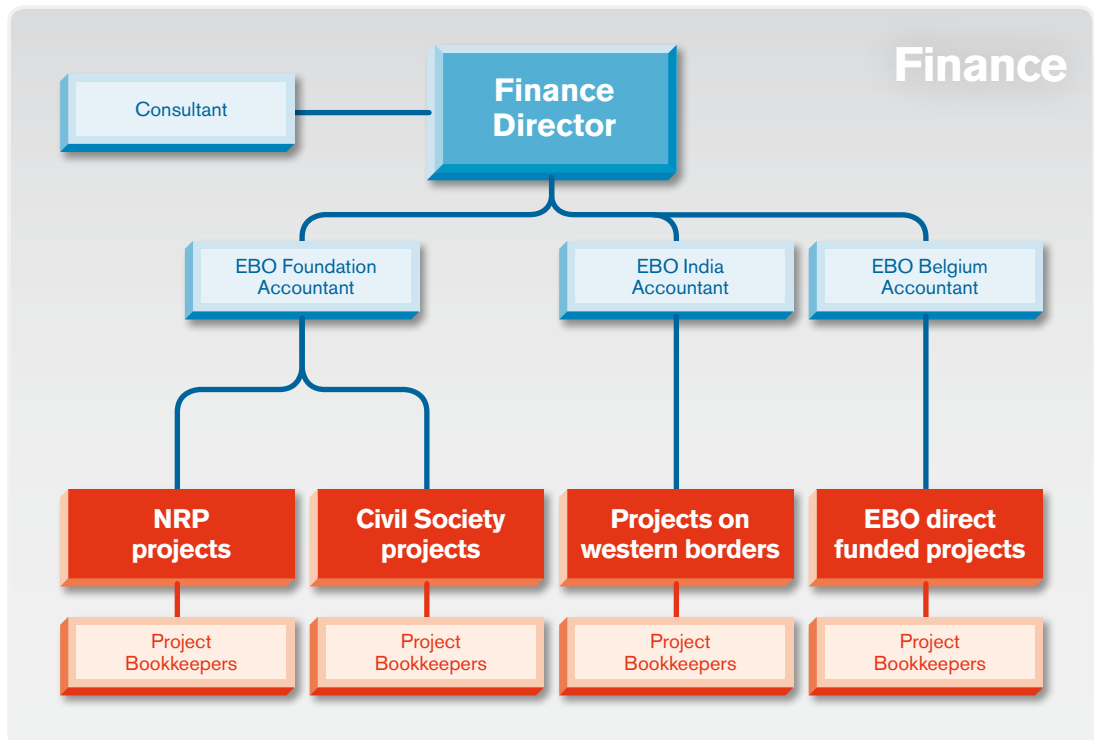
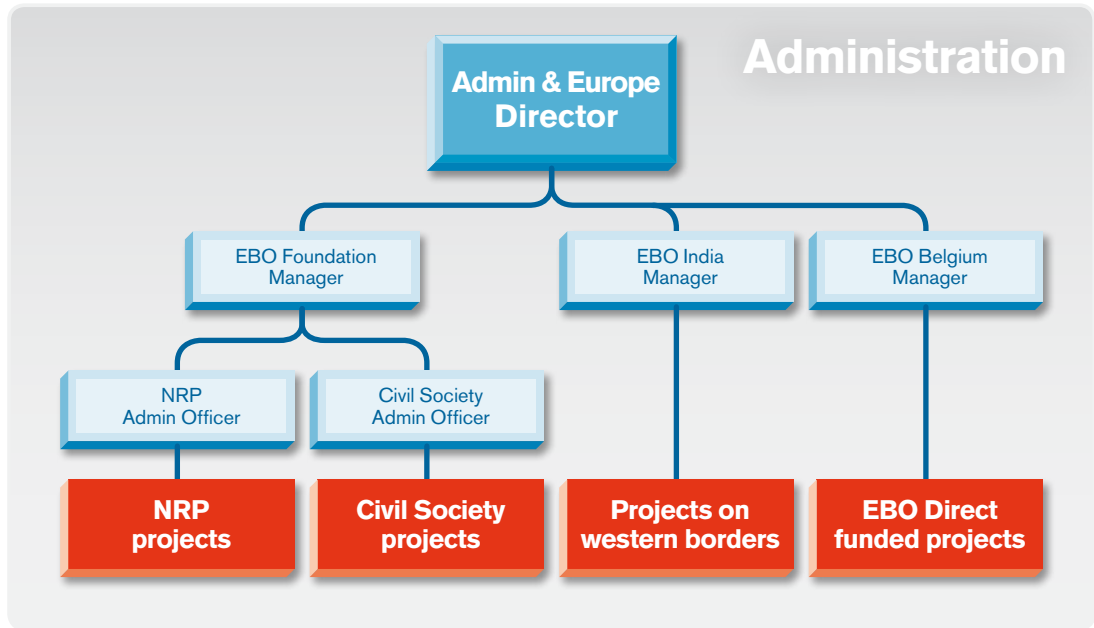
# Overall management and governance



# Operations









**EBO accounts in Chiang Mai, Thailand, are audited by:**

- a** Danish NRP Funds – Mr Dhanatat Hattakitthatree authorized auditor no. 5018, Excellent Consultant, Bangkok, Thailand
- b** EIDHR Funds – Price Waterhouse Coopers Ohrlings, Stockholm, Sweden.
- c** Other Funds – Price Waterhouse Coopers Ohrlings, Stockholm, Sweden.

**AUDITORS**

ADDB accounts in Canada are audited by Michael A. King, C.A. of London, Ontario.

**EBO accounts in Brussels, Belgium are audited by:**

- a** Norwegian Funds – SCPRL *Joiris, Rousseaux & Co, Reviseurs d'entreprises associés*, Mons, Belgium.
- b** Swedish Funds – Price Waterhouse Coopers Ohrlings, Stockholm, Sweden.
- c** Other Funds – Price Waterhouse Coopers Ohrlings, Stockholm, Sweden.

EBO accounts in New Delhi, India, are audited by Price Waterhouse Coopers Ohrlings, Stockholm, Sweden.

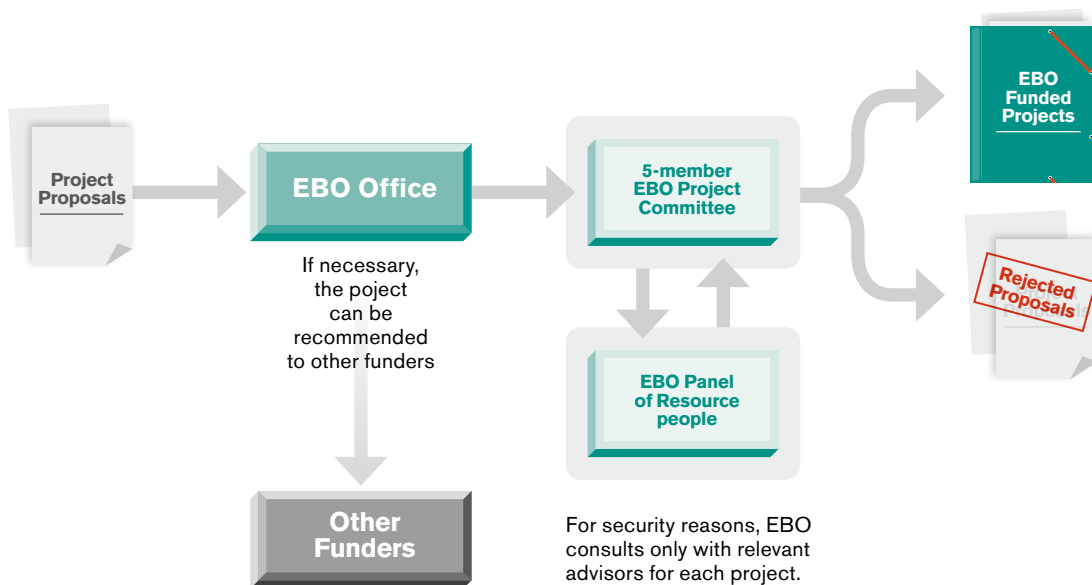


## EBO FUNDING DECISIONS:

Decisions on funding activities along the borders of Burma (in Thailand, China, India and Bangladesh) are made through already existing structures such as the National Reconciliation Programme (NRP) and committees / resource groups for other projects.

EBO direct-funded projects and activities inside Burma that are more sensitive in terms of the security of the implementers are carried out in a low-profile and confidential manner in formal consultations with local stakeholders and relevant members of the EBO panel of resource people.

For proposals submitted to the NRP, please see page 40.







**Targets  
and priorities**



# Euro-Burma Office

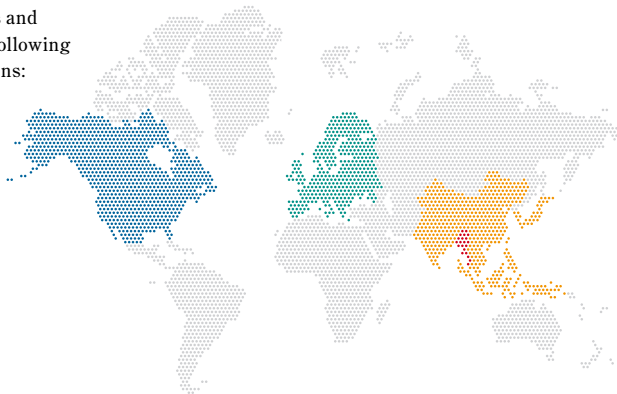
## EBO target groups and priorities



**1** Harn Yawnghe, Executive Director of Euro-Burma Office with Padoh Saw Ba Thinn, Karen National Union  
**2** EBO Consultation December 2009 **3/4** Working group discussions at EBO consultation 2008

EBO has activities and operations in the following geographic locations:

- ➔ Burma
- ➔ Europe
- ➔ Asia
- ➔ North America



Priority target groups of EBO include:

- ➔ Political parties, political activists and organizations,
- ➔ Civil society and community-based organizations,
- ➔ The international community especially the United Nations and relevant governments.



In Burma, political parties and civil society groups are not commonly known for their policies. They tend to be known by their leaders who usually come from reputable families. Decisions are taken by the leader and followed by the party or organisation. When there is a change in leadership, party members may decide to stay with the old leadership and form another organization. Furthermore, many societies in Burma are traditional and hierarchical. Therefore, the process of democratisation in Burma sometimes has to overcome cultural barriers and can be time-consuming.

EBO is endeavouring, step by step, to support leaders who want to see a change in the status quo and who understand the importance of the formation of democratic political parties and civil society organisations based on principles and the rights of individuals.

EBO believes strongly in the *process* of democratization, rather than placing the emphasis on dramatic, overnight changes. With this in mind, the long term development and capacity building of Burmese political groups and individuals and civil society in Burma is at the core of the EBO approach. The focus is on the creation of policy towards a transition. The international community can then support this strategic vision through the different tools they have at their disposal.

In his recent book, David Steinberg states that:

“Democracy is neither inevitable nor inaccessible in Myanmar. If it were to come, it would not be instantly born fully formed from the head of some Zeus-like person or event. Democracies evolve, often in unbalanced directions, and political cultures also evolve to accommodate and then encourage democratic continuity and deepening. A political system recognized internationally as a democracy is certainly possible over time in that country. But to expect that even a peaceful transfer of power to a real civilian regime would automatically, ipso-facto, result in such a system, which seems to be the unsophisticated international mantra of the moment, is more than unrealistic. That is not to claim that there should not be political change, just that evolution is far more likely than revolution in this instance. The range of criteria to define democracy is complex, and elections are just one element in that process [...] Because democracy is a process, there are intermediate stages that might be encouraged. The most obvious is some form of political pluralism. Fostering this development is possible through the assistance in the development of civil society [...] Even under the present administration, these organizations have grown [...] and they were give a great impetus by Cyclone Nargis [...] For them to have an impact on democratic growth, there needs to be close interplay among networks of such organizations.”

➔ **David Steinberg**  
*Burma/Myanmar:  
What Everyone Needs  
to Know*, Oxford  
University Press, 2010  
pp 172-175

Within each of the groups identified, the EBO pays special attention to the disenfranchised, particularly:

- ➔ Women
- ➔ Youth
- ➔ Ethnic minorities
- ➔ Religious minorities

One of EBO's aspirations is to draw in groups that are left out of the democratic political process. The word *disenfranchised communities* refers to groups of people who were not previously included in the negotiation process of the democratic movement.

For example, in 1990, after the National League for Democracy (NLD) won the

elections in 1990, international funding agencies began funding the Burmese democracy movement. However, ethnic nationality groups were generally not funded. Even the National Council of the Union of Burma (NCUB) could not be funded because its membership included the National Democratic Front (NDF) — a key ethnic organization. The fear amongst funders was that if ethnic groups are funded, they could be contributing to armed conflict because some ethnic groups are armed.

In 1997, these groups continued to be excluded from political discussions. The inclusion and active participation of these groups in the democratic political process

then became an important point of focus for EBO. Thanks to the will and energy of these formerly disenfranchised groups, their activities have been so successful that they are now widely accepted as political partners in negotiations. The blossoming of this new landscape within the disenfranchised communities is very encouraging for the future of Burma, and the quality of participation from young people and women in politics is deeply linked to the sustainability of a peaceful, democratic society. This achievement is of great significance when one considers that 10 years ago the movement was almost exclusively led by older men who were leaders of either political parties or military groups.



# Advocacy

TARGETS AND PRIORITIES

With the empowerment of disenfranchised communities and a rights-based approach at the heart of the overall EBO programme, advocacy naturally becomes a mainstreamed and integrated element of all EBO activities.

A common definition and understanding of advocacy is: *A set of targeted actions in support of a cause or an issue, because one wants to build support for that cause or issue, influence others to support it, or try to influence or change legislation that affects it.*

**There are a number of different advocacy techniques and strategies including:**

- a** Awareness raising and public campaigns on a particular issue;
- b** Lobbying policy makers and decision makers to influence legislation or to mobilize resources to meet an unmet need;
- c** Networking – bringing together individuals or groups to work together for a common purpose;
- d** Data collection and research to promote or facilitate a particular issue
- e** Facilitation of community level attitudinal and behavioural change.

Individual elements of these various advocacy strategies are reflected in detail in the report of each activity/priority of the EBO, which are both domestic and international.

Since 1997, EBO has facilitated the lobbying efforts of the Burmese democracy movement, including for example, the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB), the Women's League of Burma (WLB), the Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC), youth organisations, and civil society organisations, etc.

EBO has also enabled the individuals and organisations in the Burmese democracy movement to carry out necessary research and data collection to facilitate advocacy, as discussed in later sections.

Networking towards a common goal is a key element of every EBO activity and the process of changing attitudes and behaviours is a crucial element of the EBO programme, as also demonstrated in later sections.





## Women

### TARGETS AND PRIORITIES

Despite Aung San Suu Kyi's leadership of the National League for Democracy (NLD), women had long remained a minority within the leadership of the Burmese democracy and ethnic movements. Prior to 1999 there was no organized independent organisation representing women. Women were effectively excluded from the political process. However, women form the backbone of Burmese society and needed to be more involved in the political process. Therefore, EBO has made it a priority to fund organisations and projects to support the inclusion of women in the democratic movement.



EBO funded the first forum of women's organisations, which paved the way for the creation of a governance structure and the overall programme objectives of the Women's League of Burma (WLB), which was successfully established on 9 December 1999.

Today, through the WLB, women are represented on all major committees and delegations. Although EBO still funds a small percentage of their annual budget (approx 15%), the WLB has become such a crucial and dynamic organisation that they now receive funds from many different donors. They actively contribute to policy development and the development of strategic objectives ensuring that the perspective and needs of women are reflected. The participation of women in a broad range of activities is now taken for granted. Until WLB was formed, women had no major role in the political decision making process, and the idea of including women in the movement has changed the dynamics of the movement. The Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC) has made a quota of 30% of the board for women, and the WLB is a member of the ENC's Strategy Coordination Committee (SCC). The acceptance of the role of women in political infrastructure – especially decision making bodies – has certainly changed the dynamics of the movement and the society's perception of the role of women. There is not yet gender parity in leadership structures, but the dynamic has certainly changed over the last 10 years.

1/2 An NRP funded meeting:  
photos taken after successfully  
forming the WLB on 9 Dec 1999

WLB and its member organisations are part of the democratic movement's lobbying to seek support from the international community for meaningful political change in Burma. The WLB and its member organisations have also had a major impact on international perceptions of the political problems of Burma and the abusive role of the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). Women delegates are included in all delegations and lobbying activities. Policy papers developed by the WLB and Mon, Shan,

Kachin, Karen, Chin, Palaung and Lahu women's groups have had a major impact on the political process both domestically and internationally. For example, the publication of *License to Rape* by the Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN) and the WLB had a major world-wide impact in increasing the international profile of the political and human rights abuses by the SPDC.

The Shadow Report presented in 2008 by women from various Burmese women's groups through the WLB to the UN

CEDAW (Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women) is another example of this. The report met international standards (many of their recommendations were taken up by the official committee report) and showed the level of women's awareness on gender equity issues related to Burma, which was much higher than the Burmese governmental NGOs sent to the CEDAW review by the military regime.



# Youth

TARGETS AND PRIORITIES

**Y**outh are also an important constituency in the movement. Like women's groups, EBO has empowered youth in their activities, as well as encouraging active participation in policy making processes. Two youth umbrella organizations, the Nationalities Youth Forum (NY Forum) and the Students and Youth Congress of Burma (SYCB), are members of the Strategy Coordination Committee (SCC) and play an important role in Strategic Consultation Meetings (SCM). The constituencies represented within the democratic movement have been extended by the involvement of the youth groups. Recognizing and accepting the role of youth in political infrastructure has not only given more legitimacy to the broader mandate of the movement, but has also mobilized a huge sector of the population to get involved in the political process.

The EBO, primarily through the NRP, has supported the NY Forum – an organisation where youth from different ethnic backgrounds work together on areas of common interest such as the environment, land confiscation, human rights, youth capacity building, etc. For example, EBO has supported the Karen Youth Organization (KYO) to do a Youth Political Advocacy training. EBO had originally hoped that the youth, like the women, would be able to form an umbrella organisation like the Women's League of Burma, however this has proven to be very difficult given the many different youth organisations even within one ethnic group. The strategy now is to enable youth to work together on specific issues, such as environmental challenges. While ethnic youth have achieved recognition in the Burmese democratic movement, it is worth mentioning that they have also

established and maintained excellent grassroots networks within their communities inside Burma.

EBO has funded, among others, the following youth organizations - Students and Youth Congress of Burma (SYCB), Nationalities Youth Forum (NYF), All Kachin Students and Youth Union (AKSYU), Chin Students & Youth Federation (CSYF), Karen Youth Organization (KYO) through Karen State Coordinating Body, Karenni National Youth Organization (KNYO), Kayan New Generation Youth (KNGY), Mon Youth Progressive Organization (MYPO), Shan Youth Committee, Shan Youth Power, Kaw Dai (Shan State Youth), All Arakan Students and Youth Congress (AASYC), United Lahu Youth Organization (ULYO).

“As an ethnic youth alliance, NY Forum is being recognized by other alliances as an important group of Burma's democracy and ethnic movement. NY Forum has chance to be member of SCC and can have the same level of policy making with other alliances. Ethnic youth's voice are recognized and welcomed. NY Forum is fully participating, cooperating and taking responsibility in the SCC, SCM... NY Forum is also taking responsibility as a coordinator to form broad based alliances of movement.”

➔ **Aung Naing Soe**  
General  
Secretary  
of NY Forum

3 Mon Youth Seminar 2009 4 Karen Youth Conference







## Ethnic minorities

### TARGETS AND PRIORITIES

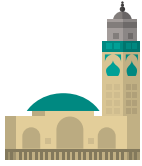
In 1994, the United Nations General Assembly called for a tri-partite dialogue to resolve Burma's problems and to build a sustainable democracy. Tri-partite dialogue denotes dialogue between the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC — the Burmese military regime), the democracy movement and the ethnic nationalities. This call was a wake-up call for the Burmese democratic movement. It has not only become a tool for creating political awareness among ethnic nationalities, but also mobilizing and creating a role for women and youth in political processes, as well as challenging and re-examining the political reality which finally lead to the creation of the Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC) representing the seven ethnic States and committing to establish a Federal Union of Burma. There was no real political representative body for all ethnic nationalities before the Ethnic National Council (ENC) was formed in 2004.

The process has encouraged and created unity among intra-ethnic and more broadly inter-ethnic nationalities. Without having unity among one ethnic group, it would be almost impossible to establish unity, and cooperation among all the ethnic nationalities. EBO has supported all activities that have led to creating political infrastructures at intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic levels.

Since no opposition parties or activities are tolerated in Burma, the work of encouraging and preparing ethnic nationalities for a dialogue is extremely complicated and it has taken longer than expected. To create a political infrastructure among widely spread ethnic nationalities – including ceasefire and non-ceasefire groups – requires very delicate negotiations, which respect the wide diversities among ethnic communities, seeing these differences as positive, rather than negative. This issue is further discussed in later sections of the report.







# Religious minorities

TARGETS AND PRIORITIES

**E**BO believes that the empowerment and inclusion of religious minorities in the political process are very important for the movement in order to establish a durable solution to decade-long problems. The movement has positively responded to this and has started to apply this concept to reality. Instead of excluding minorities, EBO has worked to include these communities into the political process. An example of this is the work with Rohingya communities. The Arakan people live in Arakan state which borders Chin State, Burma and Bangladesh. The majority of the Arakanese are either Buddhist or Muslim, and there have been conflicts between these two religious groups in the past. Prior to 1999, the four Arakan political organisations did not talk to each other and at times fought each other. The Muslim Rohingya in Arakan State are denied citizenship by the SPDC, and prior to 1999 they were ignored by the Burmese democracy movement. The Rohingya's attempts to be recognized and included in the political mainstream were rejected.

Beginning in 2000, EBO began working with different Rohingya groups to build internal unity and to include them in discussions about the future Union of Burma. In 2008, the Arakan Rohingya Council was formed. It includes the three main Rohingya political organisations

and civil society actors. Through negotiations with EBO, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) has decided to sponsor a Rohingya Unity Seminar and has tasked EBO to work with appropriate civil society and political leaders in order to encourage the unity and reconciliation process. In principle, the Arakan National Council (ANC) has also agreed to work together with the Rohingya.

EBO has also provided financial support for the advocacy work of the Arakan Project, which conducts valuable research and advocates on behalf of the Rohingya (both those inside Burma and those living outside as refugees). The Arakan Project is the primary organisation to be consulted by the UN, international governments and other members of the international community on key issues related to the Rohingya.





**Key achievements  
and challenges**





# Activities of the EBO: Key achievements and challenges

This section gives an overview of some of the key activity areas of the EBO over the past 13 years and offers some reflections on the successes and challenges of the activities.

## Activities of the EBO have principally included:

- a** Strategic analysis, policy briefings and recommendations, and news updates
- b** Support for intra- and inter-ethnic political consultations to resolve conflicts (predominantly supported through the National Reconciliation Programme)
- c** Support for broad-based political infrastructures to develop common strategies and priorities (predominantly supported through the National Reconciliation Programme)
- d** Support for a primary database to enable the planning of a comprehensive human resources development programme
- e** Support for internships and capacity building programmes
- f** Support for media and information projects

It should be highlighted here that EBO does not directly implement projects. EBO principally funds projects and activities that are within its objectives, which are proposed and implemented by the stakeholders of the communities. The successful outcomes of any of the following activities are dependent on the commitment and hard work of the project implementers and the communities themselves.



**1** Harn Yawngnwe taking part in a panel discussion on Burma **2** Global Conversation on Democracy and Democratisation organized by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies in New Delhi, India **3** Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC) meeting with the Indian Parliamentarian Forum for Democracy in Burma (IPFDB)

All photos are related to policy briefings and advocacy work (see overleaf on page 20 for more information)



## ◆ Strategic analyses, policy briefings and recommendations, and news updates

### **The EBO raises awareness on Burma issues internationally, with a focus on:**

- ➔ the United Nations (UN),
- ➔ Asia (principally India, China & other neighbouring countries, ASEAN and Japan),
- ➔ Australia
- ➔ Institutions and Member States of the European Union (and also other non-EU countries such as Norway and Switzerland), and
- ➔ North America (USA and Canada)

Internationally, EBO has been successful in raising awareness on the complex situation in Burma. As with all areas of EBO activities, EBO has actively encouraged the participation of formerly disenfranchised Burmese groups in international policy. EBO has facilitated the participation of Burmese women, youth, and ethnic groups and religious minorities into international policy forums. The inclusion of these groups has depended and broadened the policies of the international community, and changed perceptions. The ethnic nationalities are now seen by the international community as equal partners in political and constitutional reform, and international policies better reflect their needs and aspirations.

EBO activities to mobilize international support were initially through lobbying but increasingly are for policy development and strategic planning. EBO helped forge an

international consensus to maintain political pressure on the Burmese military regime while concurrently exploring alternate strategies to promote a transition and to provide more humanitarian aid to an increasingly vulnerable population. EBO also aims to ensure that concerns and aspirations of individuals and civil society groups working inside Burma towards democratic reforms are disseminated to the international community without risking their personal or professional security.

EBO disseminates information on developments within Burma to governments and decision-makers, parliamentarians, political groups and parties, and NGOs. EBO provides the international community with information on developments within the ethnic groups, the Burmese democratic movement and the SPDC. It also briefs governments on particular topics as requested.

Burma's huge problems in terms of ongoing conflict in ethnic areas, lack of social infrastructure (such as health and education) and increasing poverty have not only had an impact inside Burma, but also across its borders in Thailand, China, India, and Bangladesh. These unresolved issues raise concerns for regional stability, and EBO has focussed on briefing neighbouring countries to create a common perception of the situation and to appeal to the self interests of the neighbouring countries. Burma is not the top foreign policy priority for any Asian country, but many now recognize that the military does not have the will or the ability to resolve Burma's problems and that the status quo could lead to further instability. However, they are not willing to 'interfere' publically.

EBO supports the ENC's call for multi-party talks on Burma as a possible international format for strategic international talks on Burma. The multi-party talks would follow a similar format to the North Korea Six Party Talks, only with the inclusion of the UN. The principles of national sovereignty,

territorial integrity of the Union and national control of the process of change would need to be maintained. Multi-party talks could have a number of possible concrete benefits – increased humanitarian aid and cross border assistance, technical assistance from the World Bank and stronger strategies to combat social issues, such as health and education. Hence, EBO is working on a long-term political and diplomatic approach in order to prepare Burma for a sustainable political transition and asks the support of the international community on this initiative.

This consensus paved the way for the formation of the Tripartite Core Group – the SPDC, ASEAN, and the UN – to deliver much needed humanitarian aid after Cyclone Nargis struck in May 2008. The consensus has also broadened to include 'non-Western' nations such as Japan, China, and India. EBO's crucial role has been recognized and it is frequently requested to brief the United Nations Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on Burma, the European Commission, the EU Special Envoy for Burma, the Foreign Ministries of the 27

EU-Member States, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, the Government of Canada, and numerous policy think-tanks including those in China and India.

EBO has also participated in and funded numerous successful international meetings and conferences which have deepened the understanding of the international community on Burma issues. These conferences also provide opportunities for Burmese to interact with their international counterparts through lectures, seminars and conferences and to share understanding and expertise.

EBO has also, since the very beginning, supported and funded a number of international advocacy delegation visits from Burmese political and civil society groups.



## 2 Support for intra- and inter-ethnic political consultations to resolve conflicts

EBO has supported through the NRP a huge number of intra and inter-ethnic political consultations to resolve conflicts. Two important consultative processes – the state constitution drafting process and the federal constitution drafting process – are discussed in detail in this chapter to highlight these processes and to indicate some key achievements and challenges.

The grassroots work on constitutional matters through the State Constitution Drafting Committees (SCDCs) continues to receive funds from EBO today.

1 Jack Sterken and Dr. Lian Sakhong

2 Khaing Mar Kyaw Zaw and Rimon Htoo at an ENC meeting



### STATE CONSTITUTION DRAFTING PROCESS

Both the state constitution drafting process and the federal constitution process started with support from EBO and NRP. When the ENC was created, it took over these initiatives through its State Coordinating Bodies which enables them to connect with constituencies.

The NRP has supported Constitution Drafting Committees (CDCs), such as the Shan CDC known as *Shan State Constitution Drafting Committee* and the Chin CDC, etc. The official name for the whole process is the *Supporting Committee for State Constitutions* (SCSC), which was initiated by the Joint Action Committee (JAC) of the United Nationalities League for Democracy – Liberated Area (UNLD-LA) and the National Democratic Front in March 2001, but transformed into the SCSC in 2003. The NRP supported the state constitutions drafting process through the SCSC. The First Chairman

of SCSC was Dr. Chao Tzang Yawngghwe. Special allocations were earmarked for women and youth, recognising that these groups need special attention in the process. Constitutional development committees are now operating in all states and each of them has produced at least the first drafts of their respective state constitutions. Constitutional consultations are on-going in all states. All state constitutional development activities are now coordinated through the State Coordinating Bodies, which are formed under the ENC, except for Shan State. Constitutional positions reflected in the 'New Panglong Spirit' have been adopted by consensus by all groups.

The basic principles for rebuilding the Union of Burma defined in 2004 as part of the Ethnic Nationalities Solidarity and Cooperation Committee work on the 'New Panglong Initiative' (supported by the NRP) remain as critical today as they were when they were first envisioned. The six basic principles are:

- a A peaceful resolution of the crisis in the Union,
- b The resolution of political problems through political dialogue,
- c Respect for the will of the people,
- d The recognition and protection of the rights of all citizens of the Union,
- e The recognition and protection of the identity, language, religion, and cultural rights of all nationalities, and
- f The recognition and protection of the rights of the constituent state of the Union through a federal arrangement.



### 1<sup>st</sup> step

Members of the state constitution drafting committees and leaders participated in a series of workshops and seminars on federalism and states-federal relations, which also included exchanges, discussions and debates. These discussions took place between leaders of the movement within an intra- and inter-ethnic dialogue.

The first State Constitution Seminar was held in August 2001, organised by the JAC. The guiding principles and frameworks were discussed by leaders and participants from various ethnic nationalities within a state format. The outcome was the formation of constitution drafting committees. The state constitutions drafting – or a rather study and exploration – process continued apace with a landmark workshop/seminar where participants (which included leaders from the big political groups, various organisations and members of state constitution drafting committees) were presented with a model state constitution, compiled from state constitutions of the United States of America. This workshop was jointly organized by the NDF and the UNLD-LA.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> step

This step started with study tours and exploration of state constitutions in other existing federations in the world. The participants were members of the Federal Constitution Drafting Committee and State Constitution Drafting bodies. The study group toured Germany and Belgium and met members of state governments, and state assemblies or legislatures and held discussions and briefings. They also consulted with constitutional experts and scholars. The group also studied local governments, where the participants gained some knowledge and an understanding of how local governments functioned and were run in a democratic, decentralized system, through many briefings and discussions with mayors and members of the local government councils, in both Germany and Belgium. Other federal education trips were in Thailand and to Berlin (Seminar of December 2002 and 2003).



### 3<sup>rd</sup> step

There were, and continue to be, regular consultations with grassroots communities, leaders, political parties, academics, and other interested and concerned parties.



1 Participants on the way to an ENC conference 2 Meeting to establish the Ethnic Nationalities Council at Law Khi Lah  
3 Conference participants having dinner

### 4<sup>th</sup> step

Workshops were held to discuss the completed first drafts of the various state constitutions. Participants included members of the various state constitution drafting bodies, the federal constitution drafting committee, political leaders, representatives from women's and youth groups, and leaders from ethnic-based organisations. Experts or persons with knowledge of state constitutions and local governments (in decentralized democratic systems) facilitated discussions and clarified points that needed clarification or elaboration.

The first workshop looked at the first draft of the Chin State Constitution written by the drafting committee. The draft Chin State Constitution was discussed widely and extensively by the participants and resource persons, before examining the work done by the other drafting committee of other constituent states.



“It might be noted that the end goal of the state constitutions drafting process is not to produce actual state constitutions, but to prepare leaders, activists, the politically aware segments, and as well the grassroots for a time to come in the near future when a new Union will be rebuilt. The aim rather is to arm the people with an awareness and knowledge about constitutions and how they relate most significantly to the aspirations of the ethnic nationalities for freedom, self-determination, self-rule, human security, human dignity, rights that are alienable to every man and woman.”

➔ **Dr. Chao Tzang Yawnghwe**

Working on the draft  
Chin State Constitution

The process of creating these draft state constitutions has created an environment for all ethnic groups to come together, discuss challenges and aspirations and to create a strategy to act collectively within and among ethnic groups. For example, the Shan State Constitution Drafting Committee (SSCDC) is an excellent example of how the different non-Shan ethnic groups in Shan State (Kachin, Lahu, Wa, Pa-O, Lisu etc...) became involved in the constitutional process and were able to open lines of communication. To make these draft state constitutions accessible and acceptable to the constituencies and to the military government remains a challenge. However, EBO, through the Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC), continues to facilitate the process by reaching out to constituencies and continues to strengthen this process.

Preparation for building a federal union began with drafting state constitutions in each state, but there are other challenges that still need to be addressed. There remains the need for more cooperation and coordination among ethnic nationalities on many other issues such as human resources management, information gathering, data collection and knowledge exchange.

The creation of the ENC came out from the need of the ethnic nationalities movement. All ethnic nationalities share the common goal of rebuilding Burma as a federal democratic state and they are all willing to work together in cooperation with Burman counterparts. There was a need for more coordination among ethnic people to find solutions and prepare for a democratic transition. The constitution drafting process provided a platform that could be used for policy making and policy coordination on other matters and in response to urgent humanitarian needs. These considerations urged the ethnic nationalities to look into a broader, more efficient approach and cooperation, which resulted in creating the ENC.

Drawing up state constitutions in each state is an initial and important step for the future of Burma. Civilians from each state should have access to the constitutions as they are the intended beneficiaries. There should also be opportunities for ethnic states to study constitutions from other ethnic states in order to encourage understanding and cooperation – while the needs are sometimes very different from one state to another, learning from one another is the cornerstone of the democratic process.

One particularly good example of a successful state constitution drafting process is the example from Chin State. Prior to 1999, the Chin community was divided into at least 8 factions and two armed-groups. In 1998, a meeting was organised in Ottawa by EBO and the International Center for Human Rights. Different clans from Chin State met together and at the end of this meeting, the *Chin Forum* was formed. This pan-Chin platform includes different Chin organisations and individuals who come together to discuss issues concerning Chin people and the Union of Burma. From discussions at the Chin Forum, a political consensus was formed and eventually led to the creation of the Chinland Constitution Drafting Committee, which is a model for other ethnic groups. Due to consistent support from EBO for Chin political consultation, the Political Affairs Committee of Chinland was able to be created in 2004 and subsequently the Chin National Council was established in 2006. This is a state coordinating body of the Chin people made up of Chin civil society and political organisations. It is working in line with the ENC policy toward rebuilding the Union.



## FEDERAL CONSTITUTION DRAFTING PROCESS

The ENC is committed to rebuilding the Federal Union of Burma based on the spirit of the Panglong Agreement which will guarantee democratic rights, political equality, and self-determination. The initiative of preparing for federalism in Burma started even before ENC was formed. The ENC will continue the

process until federalism is well established in Burma.

To rebuild the Federal Union of Burma in the 'spirit of Panglong' will require the fundamental rights for all citizens to be guaranteed. The foundation of this is the United Nations Declaration of Universal Human Rights, and the principles of indivisibility of human rights and non-discrimination.

The process of formulating the *basic principles* for the future Federal Constitution of the Union of Burma began in May 2004. In September 2004, the Joint Action Committee (JAC) was formed to draft the basic principles. The JAC had 9 members: the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB), National Council of Union of Burma (NCUB), National Democratic Front (NDF), United Nationalities League for Democracy Liberated Areas (UNLD-LA) and Women's League of Burma (WLB) in collaboration with the Federal Constitution Drafting Committee (FCDCC) and Supporting Committee for State Constitutions (SCSC). The aspiration is to produce *basic principles* for a future Federal Constitution of the Union of Burma as General Aung San did in 1947, which could be used to respond effectively to SPCD's National Convention (the 6 objectives including 104 Articles) and Road Map, and which could bring peace and democracy to the country.

Between October 2004 and February 2005, the JAC conducted five meetings-cum-workshops. The JAC worked as neutral body rather than as group of political organisations, and the main task of the JAC was to produce the legal framework of the principles. The JAC applied three approaches in formulating the Basic Principles for the Future Union of Burma - identifying the original principles of the Union of

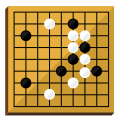
Burma in 1947, collecting historical facts and supporting documents, and defining and writing a concept paper on the 'Basic Principles' for the Future Union of Burma.

On 12 February 2005 - the Union Day of Burma, representatives of the Chin, Kachin, Karen, Karenni, Mon, Myanmar (Burman), Rakhine (Arakan) and Shan (more than 106 representatives from 42 organisations, including elected MPs, senior leaders of ethnic nationalities and political parties, and representatives of women and youth organisations) met and agreed that the political crisis in present Burma is not an ideological confrontation between a democracy and totalitarianism, but a constitutional problem rooted in the question of self-determination for non-Burman nationalities who joined the Union of Burma as equal partners in 1947 at the Panglong Conference. Therefore, the best way of solving the political crisis in Burma was to establish a genuine Federal Union based on the principles of equality for all ethnic nationalities, the right of self-determination for all member states of the Union, and democratic rights for all citizens of the Union of Burma. The delegates unanimously endorsed the basic principles of sovereign power, equality, self-determination, federal principles, minority rights, democracy, human rights, gender equality, secular state, and a multi-party democracy system for the future federal constitution.

At this meeting, the *Basic Principles* identified by the JAC for the Future Federal Constitution of the Union of Burma were adopted. It was also unanimously decided to form a new committee that would work towards forming the future Federal Constitution of the Union of Burma with the identified Basic Principles. Thus, the Federal Constitution Drafting and Coordination Committee (FCDCC) came into existence on 19 April 2005, comprising of the following groups: NCGUB, NCUB, NDF, UNLD, WLB, Nationalities Youth Forum (NY-Forum) and Students and Youth Congress of Burma (SYCB).

The FCDCC presented the first draft of the Federal Constitution of the Union of Burma at the Federal Constitution seminar held from 6 to 9 April 2006, which was adopted by 101 participants from 52 organizations, including democratic forces and ethnic nationalities. Subsequently, the FCDCC adopted the second draft of its constitution for the *Federal Republic of the Union of Burma* in February 2008.

EBO has funded the process of federal constitutional drafting through the JAC, the FCDCC and the member organisations of the FCDCC since the beginning, although such a pivotal process has also attracted funding from additional donors.



## ❖ Support for broad-based political infrastructures to develop common strategies and priorities

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS  
AND CHALLENGES

The development of broad-based infrastructure includes support to formerly disenfranchised groups such as women, youth and religious minorities. These were discussed in detail previously.

The specific role of the Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC) as a critical broad-based infrastructure has not yet been discussed in detail, therefore an analysis of the successes and challenges of the ENC is included in this section in greater depth.



**T**he development of the ENC into a major player on both the domestic and international scene has provided unprecedented opportunities for input by the ethnic and disenfranchised communities of Burma. These communities now have a structure mandated to negotiate political issues relating to establishing democratic governance in Burma. Work inside Burma expanded beyond all expectations. This rapid expansion was the product of both the political and constitutional priorities developed with the support of the NRP, and the events driven by the imposition of the SPDC constitution and referendum in 2008. These events, in addition to the Cyclone Nargis disaster, have created unprecedented fluidity in the political process. Preparations for the planned 2010 SPDC elections have the potential to create additional space for political activities and consultations inside Burma. The ENC is facilitating extensive consultations between cease-fire groups and elected political leaders inside Burma and between cease-fire leaders and political and armed groups on the border. These consultations are critical for maintaining solidarity in the face of intensive pressure and manipulation by the SPDC. These activities are an immediate consequence of the capacities developed, and strategies and policies identified by the ethnic and disenfranchised communities with the support of the NRP. It is an unavoidable consequence of success in political programming that both the range and intensity of activities will increase.

The ENC was created with the specific mandate to coordinate any negotiating processes on behalf of the ethnic nationalities of Burma. Its mandate is to coordinate the development of the negotiating positions, policies, priorities and constitutional proposals and to facilitate the meaningful participation of Burma's ethnic and disenfranchised communities in negotiations with the NLD and SPDC to achieve democratic governance in Burma. Delegates to the ENC are currently nominated by the seven ethnic state coordinating bodies.

The 1st Ethnic Nationalities Seminar was held from 7-14 January 1997 at Mae Tha Raw Hta in the base area of the Karen National Union (KNU), during which the Mae Tha Raw Hta Agreement was signed.

The outcome of the second Ethnic Nationalities Seminar was the creation of the Ethnic Nationalities Solidarity and Cooperation Committee (ENSCC).

At the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ethnic Nationalities Seminar in January 2004, the ENSCC was transformed into the ENC with a broader mandate.

As the process progressed, at the 4<sup>th</sup> Ethnic Nationalities Conference in April 2005, a new structure for the ENC was adopted, when the ENC became state-based. In this new structure, representation to the ENC was based on the existing Arakan, Chin, Kachin, Karen, Karenni (Kayah), Mon and Shan States.

These conferences have been a very important part of trust building and have led to cooperation among ethnic nationalities. Through conferences, seminars, and workshops, different ethnic groups have discussed differences learned from each other, tried to create understanding and build trust – key ingredients for successful cooperation. Conflict resolution workshops, seminars, and conferences were platforms for groups from different backgrounds to come together, to discuss, and to learn more about feasible solutions for problems within one ethnic group or among ethnic groups.

The importance of the ENC's restructuring from an organisation-based body to becoming the representative body of the seven ethnic states in the Union of Burma was that the past political landscape had been defined by armed groups, whereas the state coordinating bodies have a political coordination role that includes all groups in the state, instead of just representing the ethnic armies groups. This new structure forced all groups within each state – political, civil society, and religious – to work together. This also removed the barriers between ceasefire and non-ceasefire groups, as well as groups operating inside Burma and those outside. The ENC has also become the main coordinating body for disenfranchised communities in Burma.



“The establishment of ENC as a state based organization is very important. The aim is to open up for all seven ethnic nationality States to work together collectively in the common goal of establishing the Federal Union of Burma based on the principles of the Panglong Agreement which will guarantee democratic rights, political equality, and self-determination. ENC is also working to promote a democratic system of government and to abolish all types of totalitarianism, including military dictatorship in Burma.”

“Indeed, the creation of ENC is a success. The issues of the ethnic nationalities democratic movement and their suffering had not been

highlighted or noticed before the creation of ENSCC. Now, ENC has broadened the mandate of ENSCC to represent seven States. It is important to note that democracy will not necessarily guarantee equal rights and wellbeing of ethnic nationalities. Therefore, the existence of ENC is crucial as to establish a genuine Federal Union of Burma, which will not come easily.”

“Operationally, some State Coordinating Bodies are working well, while a few States are in the process of creating State Coordinating Bodies. It might take times, but eventually all State Coordinating Bodies will function well.”

➔ **Khu Hteh  
Bu Peh**  
ENC Chairman in 2009

The credibility of the ENC is sustained by improved consultations with its constituencies through the seven state coordinating councils and the broadening of the constituency base participating meaningfully in the political process. In particular, formally unrepresented youth and women's groups have become a major force in strategic planning and policy development. The broadening of the constituency base and increasing sophistication in the political and constitutional positions of these communities is the basis for the international credibility of the ENC. This has resulted in broadly-based consultations with all major international players attempting to resolve Burma's political problems.

Since the beginning, the NRP has supported the ENC's operational costs, including State Coordinating Bodies and Constitutional Development Committees. In some states, the Constitution Drafting Committee cooperates with the State Coordinating Body.

The coordinating bodies also organize workshops and consultations among their constituencies. The ENC has also been working towards investing in the future democratic transition. Coordinating human resources and implementing projects in seven states with many restrictions imposed by the military



government is a big challenge, which has sometimes created misunderstanding among members in ENC. However, the ENC has always overcome these challenges. In addition to the NRP's funding, EBO has also funded ENC advocacy delegations.

- 1 Khu Hteh Bu Peh
- 2 ENC training on operating digital mapping software
- 3 Digital mapping activities





## ◆ Support for a primary database to enable the planning of a comprehensive human resources development programme

This programme is managed by the ENC and is predominantly funded by EBO. Through this programme, the ENC is developing state-based primary databases on education, health and agricultural resources and capacity in rural areas of Burma where few government services in these fields exist, and where the UN does not have access. The databases will be used to plan resource transfers to support these community services in order to consolidate any eventual transition in the future.

The digital mapping programme provides an inventory of local schools (how many students, teachers, books...), health clinics (how many nurses, doctors, drugs...), and agricultural techniques at village and township level. The information is gathered by Burmese going into communities and recording information (with the use of GPS technology) to show current infrastructures in order to better ascertain future needs. It also gives information on who currently finances the infrastructure (i.e. the local community, NGOs or SPDC, etc...).

To be effective at the international level, the EBO supported team working on mapping uses the same codes and nomenclatures as those used by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA). Although information is not shared between the ENC and the UN, the data could easily be compiled and shared during an eventual transitional period.



This major initiative is divided into two parts: the ENC digital mapping team collects data in remote brown and black zones (areas of low level conflict) in Burma while UN OCHA collects data in so-called white zones or the areas where they are allowed to operate by the SPDC. (After the period covered by this report, the data collection/mapping transferred from UN OCHA to the Myanmar Information Management Unit-MIMU and the Humanitarian Information Centre for Myanmar-HIC).

The data collected will form the database upon which budgets and programme implementation will be based in an eventual transition. The data will become the basis for resource transfers designed to facilitate and consolidate an eventual transition to democratic governance.

The Primary Data Gathering started in 2007, including trainings for local staff to go into their areas (in Karen, Karenni, Chin and Mon states).

The mapping programmes are now operational in Karen State, Karenni State, Chin State and the Lahu area of Shan State. The Chin programme briefly ceased operating in mid 2009 when the Chin Programme manager was resettled to a third country. The replacement is currently being trained along with database managers in Arakan State, Mon State, Kachin State and Shan State.

This work by the ENC represents a major step in the development of the capacity of the ethnic and disenfranchised communities to make meaningful and important contributions towards establishing democratic governance in Burma.

### WHY IS MAPPING IMPORTANT?

Since the borders of Burma are wide open, there are economic ties and logistics well established between neighbouring countries (China, India, Thailand...), which can be used in a democratic transition. But as a transition could lead to the empowerment of local warlords, criminals and others looking to exploit, it is very important to map needs in remote areas.

Furthermore, there is a pressure from governments, the UN and other international organisations to have accurate figures on needs and current infrastructures inside the country. The aim is to get plans, places and resources to transfer goods and services needed across the border so that the needs of the local population in terms of health, food and education are met. This will limit the opportunities for warlords and gangsters to take political control of these areas and will ease come-border aid resources.



## 5 Support for internships and capacity-building programmes

Another EBO priority is the funding of internships and trainings. While the EBO itself cannot manage a broad internship programme, the idea is to support organisations on the border which can take on interns from inside Burma, train them, and send them back to work with their organisations inside. The internships also serve as a bridge to narrow the gap between educational levels in Burma and internationally. The internships fill a much needed void in the Burmese democracy movement.

The objective of the EBO internship programme is to counter the 'brain drain' being experienced in the democracy movement as well-qualified refugees have resettled in third countries. In Burmese refugee camps based in Thailand, there are different programmes which offer resettlement to third countries (i.e. the USA, Australia, Sweden...). This gives a wonderful opportunity to individuals to start a new life and

to learn from democratic states. However, these programmes tend to cherry-pick the small number of educated elites of the disenfranchised communities. Some have lost essential human resources, especially small communities such as the Karenni. When 10 teachers or 10 nurses leave, this is a disaster for the rest of the community, and eventually, once they live far from their country, many Burmese don't get involved in the democratic movement.

To help counter this brain drain, EBO has focused its training programme in the region. In 2009, EBO supported programmes inside Burma to prepare students who are going to study in Thailand or India by improving their English proficiency, while the NRP receives increasingly urgent requests to support human resource development programmes by state-based organisations, especially youth and women groups.

### THREE EXAMPLES OF RECENT INTERNSHIPS INCLUDE:

#### **a Kachin Women's Association in Thailand (KWAT) Internship Programme**

EBO has funded KWAT to provide an internship programme to young women from Kachin State since the internship programme started in 2006. The overall aim of this project is to promote women's education and to encourage Kachin women to increase their participation in the various sectors of society, working for political, economic and social change in Burma through the delivery of capacity building and empowerment activities. Between 2006 and 2008, KWAT has trained a total of 26 women, mostly in their early twenties. The cost per student is around £2,300 for 6 months of classroom training and a practical internship. The classroom training includes some of the following courses: English, Thai, computer skills, politics, democracy, human rights, women's rights, constitution drafting, peace building, gender, reproductive health, environmental issues, media and communications, human trafficking issue, documentation and research, proposal writing and fundraising. Records kept by KWAT on the first 17 young women alumnae show that every woman who graduated from the internship went on to work for the Kachin community or another organisation associated with the democracy movement. The scheme has become so successful and the demand for training is so great, that KWAT has been asked to accept and train young men from Kachin state as well as young women. Men were accepted into the programme for the first time in 2009.

"Inside Burma, I would never have dreamed of learning about politics and various knowledge that I learned through the internship. It is very difficult to get the right information about what is happening in the real world and in our own country. Almost all information is just propaganda. I believe that to become a strong society, all individuals must be strong and well-empowered. When somebody gets knowledge, that person can share to his/her community and society. If the civil society is well educated and empowered, it can support their government and help to build a good country. Before coming and studying at KWAT internship, I wasn't much interested in politics and education. I also didn't know much about human rights, women's rights and democracy. After completing my internship, I knew how much education and knowledge about these fields are important for the civil society. Subsequently, I had known more about the injustices committed in my country as there is no rule of law under the current military regime. Now I feel different, I feel that I can help the democratic movement and be useful in the society. I also know that we, ethnic people, are discriminated in Burma. Therefore, I strongly feel that this internship was very constructive and a wonderful opportunity to understand my country."

➔ **Ah Noh**  
intern at KWAT from July  
2007 to January 2008



KWAT interns gender training

“In my country there is no Rule of Law anywhere. Most of the people don't know what constitution, Law, or Human Rights are. But all this information is given by the KWAT internship programme. In this internship, I also exchanged experiences with other organisations. That is very important to me because in Burma, we don't know about the events happening in other regions. For example, I am Kachin so I don't know about the Chin's suffering clearly. During the KWAT internship, I could really understand what is happening. I am one of the sons of a revolutionary who served in KIO/KIA throughout his life. But the Junta government always interrupted my childhood and I fled from town to town every year. Hence, I want to be released from this poverty and always search the way how to change our country politically.”

➔ **Zau Di**  
intern at KWAT  
from July 2009 to  
January 2010

### ➔ **School for Shan State Nationalities Youth (SSSNY)**

The EBO-funded School for Shan State Nationalities Youth (SSSNY) organizes an internship programme for young men and women from Shan State. The SSSNY was created in 2001 and offers a 9-month in-depth Social Justice Education Programme with different types of lessons: human rights, history of Burma and Shan state, computer skills, English grammar and pronunciation, writing skills, environment, systems of governance and democracy studies, international crisis and conflict studies, international news, basic video

production and media studies, maths, basic science and health.

The SSSNY is based in Thailand and aims to graduate dedicated and proactive Shan State youth committed to social and political change by providing them with the necessary skills. The goal is to empower and educate Shan State youth aged 16 to 30 of different backgrounds and ethnicity, so that they can have a more active role in the struggle for democracy, human rights and gender equality.

The school provides not only education and general knowledge skills, but also food, facilities, pocket money, and ac-

commodation during the programme. The students also learn how to do research so that they can be involved in these types of activities in the future. There are also many guest speakers during the internship who give courses on issues such as HIV/AIDS, human rights, constitution trainings, etc.

More than a school, the SSSNY also serves as a venue for building trust and cooperation among the different ethnic nationalities from Shan State (Shan, Pa-O, Wa, Akha, Lahu, Palaung, Kachin, Lisu, Miao, Intha, Danu, Kayan and Kokang...). In a book called *Candles in the Dark* published in 2008, young students wrote their life-stories and explained what they learned at the SSSNY. Noom Wann is one of them:

“I am one of the students from SSSNY School. I come from Southern Shan State, Burma. I live in a small village. There are about 50 households in my village and I have many friends. I left the school after I passed grade 4. At that time, Mong Tai Army (MTA) led by Khun Sa, was the most powerful armed group in Shan State against the SPDC for many years. This MTA recruited young boys from every household in the Southern Shan State from 7 years old up. But at last, the MTA did nothing for the Shan State and surrendered to the SPDC in 1996. Many boys were caught to be soldiers by MTA troops until 1996 and some who were in the village became drug addicts. It is easy to buy the drug (like amphetamines). We can buy it everywhere; even a 4 or 5 year old child

knows how to buy it when their parents forced them to. Most of the young boys or girls in villages do not have chance to go to school. They have to help their parents at their work. My village is situated near by a SPDC military camp; whenever they come to the village, they ask the villagers about the Shan resistance. If we say we don't know anything, the SPDC suspects we take the side of the Shan soldiers and they take us to their military camp. There, they interrogate us about everything and at last, if they didn't get what they wanted, they torture us by many ways. Some were killed without any reason. There is no law to protect us. Everything ends by the power of the guns in the Burmese soldiers' hands. Before I came to Thailand, I did not know anything, even about myself. This is a light for me that I have chance to study in SSSNY School.”

➔ **Noom Wann**  
testimony from  
the book *Candles*  
*in the Dark*

The SSSNY is a huge success. From 2001 to 2009, 234 students have graduated from the programme.

### 📍 **Shan State Constitution Drafting Committee (SSCDC) Internship Programme**

EBO funded the Shan State Constitution Drafting Committee (SSCDC) to provide an internship programme in constitutional law to young men and women from Shan State. SSCDC has been running the internship programme since it was established in 2000. The priority is given to youth from inside Burma, as due to the long drawn-out conflict, the educational level of the ethnic communities is low. To bridge the educational gap, the SSCDC has provided internships to ethnic youth from Burma in Chiang Mai. The school considers the personal development of the students of the utmost importance, however it is also the most difficult to substantiate.

A crucial role of the SSCDC is to ensure an inclusive and participatory constitutional process in Shan State including as many communities as possible, and the interns play an important role in SSCDC's constitutional awareness-raising programmes. The SSCDC has played an important role in coordinating and disseminating information to communities in Shan State on the draft versions of the Shan State constitution. It also assists with the operations of all Shan state projects (political prisoners, youth capacity building training, etc).

EBO has also either hosted or facilitated internships and exposure visits for young Burmese change agents in Brussels and elsewhere.





## 6 Support for media and information projects

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS  
AND CHALLENGES

To strengthen civil society in Burma, publications and briefing documents available in ethnic languages are extremely important. Investment in ethnic research and media enable the ethnic communities to preserve their culture, to understand other communities, and to ensure that the cause of ethnic groups is not forgotten in a future Burma and that they will be equal partners in a transition. They are also important for reporting human rights abuses, historic events and political, social and economic developments in each state. EBO has supported the development and expansion of ethnic media organisations in all ethnic states.

The development of national, independent, and free media organisations in Burma is also of critical importance and EBO has invested in the development of these since 1997.

This focus on ethnic media gives the possibility to preserve the language of each community. Many ethnic languages are forbidden to be taught in schools inside Burma:

“Karen people used to have a Karen High School which taught in Karen until 1962. I personally learned my language at home. But I did not learn how to read and write it. I could only speak and understand it. When I left the country and fled to Thailand, I started to study it because there were schools in the refugee camps. But I felt very frustrated because there were only four books in Karen language. So, sometimes, I feel like what is the point of being a Karen if I am not allowed to speak, read or write my language? When I remember my friends who still live in Burma, I feel so sorry for them because I know they can only speak Karen but don't know how to write our language. Hence, they mix Karen with Burmese since they study Burmese language at school and they do not consider Karen as an important language anymore.”

→ **Lay Wah Paw**  
a 25 year old  
Karen woman

By promoting the reporting of different issues (humanitarian, political, socio-economic...), EBO's goal is also to inform policymakers, international institutions and neighbouring countries. In addition, EBO researchers provide in-depth briefing papers and analysis (available for consultation on the EBO website).

**EBO is also an information source and provides in-house research and analysis through:**

- the EBO website ([www.euro-burma.eu](http://www.euro-burma.eu)) and publications
- interviews and articles, which appear in international and Burmese media

“SHAN was formed in 1991 and has been publishing the 'Independence' monthly since. Many Shan organisations inside our State load our reports in Shan, make copies and distribute them within their communities. As a result, a good many have become news addicts. Some people naturally want to contribute, helping us to gain more news sources (during the Kokang campaign in August, we gained three hitherto unknown sources). This, in turn, has helped to produce more and better reports not only in Shan, but also in English, Burmese and Thai. The EBO is the only funder that focuses on non-Burmans. As such, it will continue to contribute to the peace and democracy building in Burma. Assisting non-Burmans and minorities may not be quite popular but discarding them will only encourage separatism and continued conflict in Burma. The EBO is certainly on the right track.”

→ **Khuensai**  
Editor of Shan  
Herald Agency  
for News (SHAN)

“EBO was very instrumental in strengthening Mizzima's capacity, especially when we were in need of IT support some years ago. The strength of the EBO is that it knows the needs of a grassroots organisation and how it is important and crucial for Burma's democratisation process.”

➔ **Soe Myint**  
Editor of Mizzima



## HISTORY SEMINARS

**E**thnic research has been a high priority for the EBO as a tool to bolster the ethnic nationalities, so that they will be able to firmly establish their place and role in the Burmese state and become equal participants. There has been special emphasis to support the development of ethnic historical research, with a focus on exploring and documenting the diversity of Burmese ethnic history, while demonstrating unity through diversity. This has been accomplished by supporting individual researchers, projects focusing on specific ethnic groups, as well as ethnic historical seminars.

The first historical seminar was on Arakan State and was an important first step in the inclusion of Rohingya people in the ongoing reconciliation process.

EBO also funded a Mon History Conference in October 2007 at Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. It offered an occasion for Mon scholars to come together in order to discuss and share knowledge on the history of the Mon.

From 13-15 October 2008, an EBO-funded international seminar on “Exploring the history, culture and identity of the Chins” was held in Aizawl, India. An array of issues were discussed from ethnicity, identity, linguistics and language, nomenclature and ethnonym, various

aspects of Chin history and historical methods to food and culinary practices, globalization, music, psychology, and finally, agricultural and farming methods. These kinds of seminars are seen as landmarks for Chin people, who are trying to unite the diverse Chin community. It allowed different communities to be brought closer culturally, linguistically and politically. The aim is also to open up opportunities for future fruitful co-operation between the two divided communities namely the Chins (in Burma) and the Mizos (in India). Seminars like this one benefit significantly the Chin struggle for freedom and democracy as well as the preparation for a democratic transition in Burma as a whole.



Book launch of the Chin Historical Seminar. Front row: Hi Phei (MP, Raja-Sabah, India), Harn Yawnghwe, Lian Uk (MP-elected 1990, Burma), Lal Thanhawla (Chief Minister of Mizoram, India), Dr. Lian Sakhong, Ngun Hre (former MP from Burma) and Dr. Robin Khuly (Mizoram University).



“The significance of this book release is what we are celebrating; it is not just the result of an academic venture. This is a celebration of the brotherhood of the children of this homeland. The very purpose of this seminar is searching for our origins, our history, our identity, and our culture so that we will be able to call ourselves, to declare ourselves, as brothers and sisters. No matter which side of international boundaries we happen to live, no matter where we are, we are still brothers and sisters of the same ancestors and we are the children of this homeland.”

➔ **Dr. Lian H Sakhong**  
Research Director of  
Euro-Burma Office,  
on 16 November  
2009, *Chin: History,  
Culture and Identity*  
book release

One of the highlights of 2009 was the first international conference on Shan Studies in Bangkok from 15-17 October, jointly organized by the Institute of Asian Studies (IAS), Chulalongkorn University and EBO. The conference sought to bring together scholars of Shan Studies from all over the world to share their knowledge and discoveries, as well as to meet and promote their co-operation.

The conference contributed greatly to the building up of the awareness and knowledge on various developments in Shan political and social history, arts, language, literature, performing arts, religions and beliefs. The forum also served as a secure meeting place for participants from Thailand and other parts of the world to create and strengthen collaboration, at national and international levels, on their research on political and social work in Shan State.

In addition to the historical seminars, EBO has also employed Burmese returning expatriates to conduct general research on ethnic nationalities and to promote the concept of unity in diversity.







# The National Reconciliation Programme





## Background of the NRP

The National Reconciliation Programme (NRP) is a programme established in 1999 by the EBO with support from the Burmese democracy movement, and Canadian Lutheran World Relief with funds from the Peacebuilding Fund of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The NRP has also been funded by EBO, Danish Burma Committee with funds from the Danish International Development Agency (Danida), Trocaire, and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).

In 1994, the United Nations General Assembly called for a tri-partite dialogue to resolve Burma's problems and build a sustainable democracy. Tri-partite dialogue means dialogue between the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC—the Burmese military regime), the democracy movement and the ethnic nationalities.

- The military with its command structure could, if it so wanted, readily represent its interests in any dialogue.
- Aung San Suu Kyi and the 1990 election-winning parties clearly had a mandate to represent Burmese democracy advocates.
- However, there were no institutions with the authority or mandate to negotiate on behalf of the widely-dispersed and diverse disenfranchised ethnic communities in Burma.

In 1998, Prime Minister Dr Sein Win of the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB) expressed in a conference in Ottawa, the need for a mechanism to bring about a tri-partite dialogue and national reconciliation.

The UN resolution had created the opportunity for finding political solutions through non-confrontational ways. Hence, EBO saw the need to support this process of national reconciliation through dialogue, confidence building and political negotiations.

National reconciliation has been the heart of the democracy movement since 1988 when pro-democracy students fled to the liberated areas. The formations of the Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB) and the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB) with the cooperation of the ethnic-based National Democratic Front (NDF) in Karen territory in 1990 were the first acts of reconciliation.

The Manerplaw Agreement, the expansion of the NCGUB Cabinet in 1995, the Mae Tha Raw Hta Agreement in 1997 and the Thumwe Kalo Agreement in 1998 are all steps taken by the movement towards ethnic and national reconciliation.

In April 1999, Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR) received a grant from the Canadian Peace-building Fund to work on ethnic reconciliation. EBO met with CLWR to formalize the structure of National Reconciliation Programme (NRP). The programme grew with the support of Danida through the Danish Burma Committee and the Irish Government through Trocaire.



**1** Ethnic leaders: Padoh Saw Ba Thinn, Karen National Union; Sao Seng Suk, Shan State Organization; and Khun Marko Ban, MP-elect 1990, Democratic Organization for Kayan National Unity. **2** Dr. Chao Tzang Yawnghwe, NRP Advisor; Sao Seng Suk and Dr. Thaug Htun, National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, at NRP Consultation May 2001 **3** Khaing Soe Naing Aung, Arakan Liberation Party; and Padoh Mahn Sha Laphan and Saw David Taw, Karen National Union, during break time, Strategy Coordinating Committee meeting

To broaden the participation of ethnic nationalities in the reconciliation activities and to formalize the structure, a Facilitating Team (FT) was officially formed in May 1999. This team consisted of the following 9 members:

- ◆ Rimond Htoo
- ◆ Sao Ood Kesi
- ◆ Khaing Soe Naing Aung
- ◆ Padoh Mahn Sha
- ◆ Dr Sui Khar
- ◆ Ms Mra Raza Lin
- ◆ U Than Htut
- ◆ Khun Marko Ban
- ◆ Dr. Naing Aung

Later, the Facilitating Team became known as the Programme Committee.

For a short time at the beginning of the NRP, a temporary Consultative Body was also conceived as a way of ensuring that the Facilitating Team had access to the best resource persons and that consultation was carried out as widely as possible.

NRP was conceived to help the traditionally disenfranchised communities in Burma prepare for meaningful participation in the tri-partite negotiations to establish democratic governance in Burma – although, in reality, all Burmese have been disenfranchised since the military took power in 1962. The 1990 elections clearly provided Aung San Suu Kyi (the leader of the National League for Democracy – NLD, which won of 82% of the seats in the parliamentary elections) with a mandate to govern. However, the refusal of the military to allow her to form the government reflects a continuation of this disenfranchisement.

The NRP facilitates the capacity development of the Burmese democratic movement with a particular emphasis on the traditionally disenfranchised communities, including the ethnic nationalities, women, youth and religious minorities.

Concretely, the NRP has funded many projects which focus on dialogue, trust building and political negotiations. By creating an environ-

ment for a consensus to take place at the domestic level, NRP activities facilitated collaboration to such an extent that the need for an organisation in which different ethnic groups could meet and negotiate became apparent. The cooperation among ethnic nationalities has led to the creation of the Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC). The ENC was created on the mandate of representing seven states which represent 40% of the population and inhabit 60% of the land area.

Democracy is a process made of compromises. When the NRP or EBO facilitates tri-partite dialogue, which includes engagement with the SPDC, this does not mean that they endorse SPDC policies. Rather, EBO attempts to find political means to end the grip of the current dictatorship on the Burmese people. Both activist and political approaches are necessary and complementary. Each organisation has its own role to play in a society, and activist organisations are as important as political parties in building a future healthy democracy in Burma.

1 Participants at the NRP consultation- May 2001





# Mandate of the NRP

THE NATIONAL  
RECONCILIATION PROGRAMME

**T**he NRP derives its mandate from the fact that it responds and facilitates, rather than implements political initiatives. The credibility and effectiveness of the NRP depends on the support and cooperation of all the major players in the Burmese democratic movement. As a facilitator, the NRP coordinates and networks intensively with local stakeholders in the democratic movement and identifies and mobilizes financial and technical resources for the political strategic objectives identified by them.

During the past 60 years, history has shown that violence does not produce positive developments in Burma, but rather creates more confrontation and conflict. In this respect, political changes in Burma should be carried out in an orderly, peaceful and democratic way. This perspective leads political leaders to explore other possible ways to promote and achieve national reconciliation in Burma. Capacity building in general and methods of

conflict resolution in particular are critical to the success of achieving a democratic vision of Burma. The NRP supports activities to achieve this goal.

In 1989, the Director of UNICEF produced the conceptual framework for pro-active programming in Burma. Sustainable development, poverty reduction and conflict prevention all depend on widening participation in economic, social and political life and establishing well-functioning accountable governance systems ([www.oecd.org/dac](http://www.oecd.org/dac)). Burma is a multi-ethnic country, and in order for democracy to work and flourish in Burma, all ethnic nationalities should be able to take part in political, social and economic life. However, so far this is not the case. Many of ethnic nationalities have not been able to take part in political and social events that have greatly impacted their lives. As long as their voices are not heard in political decision making processes, there is no guarantee of durable, peaceful solutions for Burma.



# Vision of the NRP

**T**he NRP envisions building in Burma a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic society in which conflict is resolved through dialogue and consultation rather than through the use of violence. It envisions establishing in the country a federal union where the rights of its citizens and ethnic nationalities are respected and promoted, and where ethnic nationalities have the right to define their own

political future. The NRP considers existing differences among all nationalities as sources of strength rather than weakness. It views Burma's cultural diversity as a cornerstone for creating national unity, rather than an added benefit. The NRP considers the recognition of pluralism as the most viable way to reduce costly and destructive conflicts.

**2** Padoh Mahn Sha Laphan, Sao Ood Kesi, Speaker from South Africa & Kachin Leaders







# Goals of the NRP

- a** To bring about a peaceful transition to democracy and the establishment of a Federal Union of Burma by assisting the Ethnic Nationalities in preparing for tripartite dialogue
  - b** To introduce a culture of dialogue and conflict resolution/management skills and institutions to Burmese society
  - c** To assist political stakeholders in increasing their capacity building efforts as part of the preparation for tripartite dialogue and transition to democracy
  - d** To encourage and empower all ethnic nationalities
- ➔ To discuss and define their political future
  - ➔ To engage in dialogue with other nationalities regarding their political future
  - ➔ To engage in preparing for political structures they wish to establish
  - ➔ To create conditions to safeguard and promote democratic and political structures that will be established

“The existence of the NRP is very good and valuable for our movement not only because of funding but also for cooperation and sharing knowledge and political thought. The NRP programme committee is made up of representatives of ethnic, youth, women, democratic groups of the Burma democracy movement therefore it provides for transparency and cooperation between funders and organisations. It is really great.”

“The NRP has contributed to the launch of our organisation [Nationalities Youth Forum]. Thanks to NRP's support, we can successfully implement our projects and activities. Now youth are actively involved in the policy making of Burma's democratic movement and NY Forum actively works with other alliances...”

➔ **Aung Naing Soe**  
General Secretary of NY Forum



1



2

**1** Peter Motensen, Danish Burma Committee and participants at LFA workshop for NRP proposal  
**2** NRP staff (2006) - Victor Biak Lian, Urunii Fungatsakul & Aung Latt Waje





# Type and nature of NRP activities

THE NATIONAL  
RECONCILIATION PROGRAMME

All NRP programmes are of a political nature and NRP's primary focus has been to help the ethnic nationalities of Burma and other traditionally disenfranchised groups, such as women and youth, prepare to participate in a meaningful way in any dialogue or political negotiations designed to facilitate the transition to democratic governance in Burma. The programme, however, has been expanded and the NRP now supports various activities and programmes aimed at promoting reconciliation, empowerment and conflict resolution and investing in the future of Burma.

In order for political stakeholders to achieve the goal of national reconciliation, the NRP has supported capacity building projects designed to equip political organisations with knowledge and understanding of dialogue and conflict resolution techniques.

As the participation of women and youth in the political process is crucial, the NRP has implemented programmes among women and youth of various ethnic backgrounds. The primary task of NRP is to see that projects and related activities are relevant to the strategy, needs, and focus of the national reconciliation goals.

## The major activities of NRP are:

- ➔ Collaboration with donors and potential donors, consulting with them about the needs of the movement and its organisations with reference to the national reconciliation aims and goals, and working with them with the aim of achieving greater efficiency and effectiveness.
- ➔ Collaboration with interested third parties and institutions (academic or otherwise) and also with political groups approached by the former, with the aim of ensuring that the activities are politically relevant and needed by the movement.
- ➔ Collaboration with service-providing organisations so that the real capacity building needs of political and civil society organisations are met. This also involves consultation with service providers, existing and leading political organisations and leaders, so that activities and projects are strategically relevant.
- ➔ Collaboration with political organisations engaged in national reconciliation efforts and assisting them in this regard.
- ➔ Assisting political organisations and other socio-political groups in setting up and designing strategy relevant projects focused on national reconciliation by providing suggestions and advice.
- ➔ In terms of implementation, the NRP focuses on the study of issues that are relevant to national reconciliation in general, and dialogue and transition related issues in particular, preferably in conjunction and cooperation with donors, funders, interested third parties and institutions (academic or otherwise). The goal of this is to provide input related to national reconciliation activities, programmes, projects, and facilitate and/or upgrade the operational capacity and reach of political leaders and organisations especially with reference to the Dialogue-Transition processes.

To promote transparency and accountability and to assist in the decision-making process, in November 1999 the Facilitation Team of the NRP developed the following guidelines for funding projects. The guidelines were revised in November 2004 and then again in November 2008 by the joint meeting of the NRP Programme Committee and the NRP Funding Committee:

- a The projects in general, must promote and support dialogue on political matters.
- b Projects are implemented by Burmese organisations.
- c Consultation on project implementation is carried out as widely as possible.
- d Projects utilize the most appropriate resource persons, and as much as possible utilize local resource persons.
- e Projects are funded according to the following priority criteria: Funding for certain activities in Burma will follow the same accountability criteria but for security reasons may need to be less transparent. In such cases, a special procedure will be adopted by agreement of both the Funding Committee and the Programme Committee.
- f Project activities are in accordance with the overall objectives of the NRP.

## Project activities can include:

- ➔ Inter- and intra-ethnic consultations and meetings for dialogue and consensus building
- ➔ Conflict resolution/management and peace-building workshops
- ➔ Capacity building programmes
- ➔ Strategy planning, policy development and preparation for democratic transition
- ➔ Federal education and constitution drafting.
- ➔ Rights-based approach trainings and workshops
- ➔ Trainings, workshop and seminars on gender equality and women's empowerment
- ➔ Environment

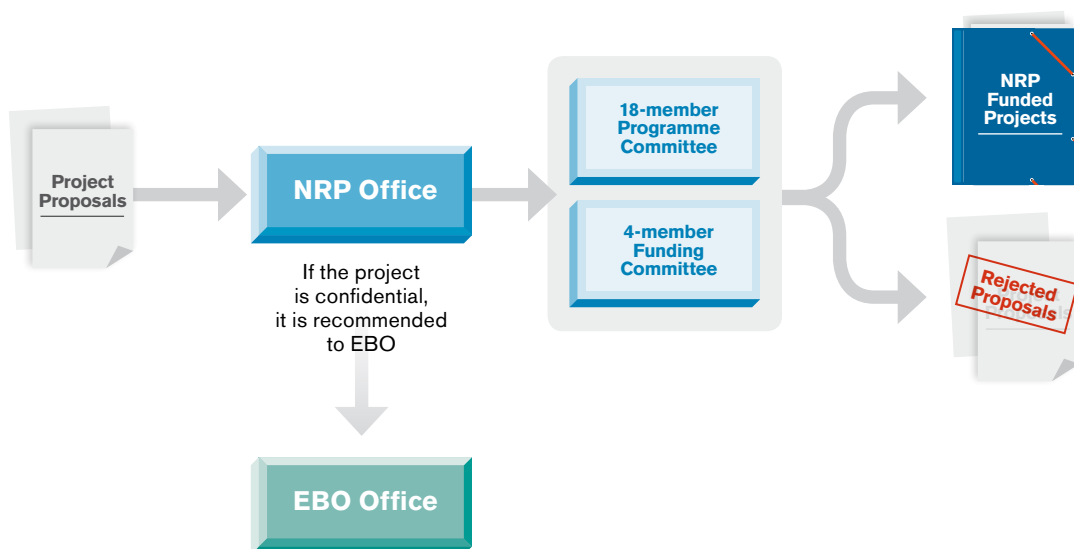
Project activities must be inclusive in terms of ethnicity, gender, age and religion, and actively promote the participation of women and youth.



## How does the NRP work

**N**RP does not implement projects on its own. NRP funds projects and activities that are within its objective towards national reconciliation. All projects are proposed and run by the stakeholders of the communities. The work of NRP is done through the Programme Committee (PC) and administered by the NRP Office.

- ➔ NRP is a facilitating and funding programme
- ➔ It provides resources on the basis of priorities identified by the movement
- ➔ Proposals are reviewed by the Programme Committee
- ➔ NRP facilitates processes that promote mechanisms serving to tackle and resolve major sources of protracted conflict, which have created ethnic, religious, and political divisions in the country
- ➔ NRP is tasked with assisting all stakeholders in their discussions, consultations, and coordination and in the making of strategies and choices that will promote and consolidate national reconciliation



## The NRP Office

The ultimate success of the NRP depends on good communication, close cooperation and coordination between the various project activities and the Burmese democratic movement. In support of this, the NRP Office was established at EBO. It facilitates the coordination of the programme through:

- ➔ Communication of policy input from the Burmese democratic movement and ethnic leadership
- ➔ Communication of project activities and information and reporting to donor agencies
- ➔ Communication of field input to the NRP Programme Committee



# NRP Programme Committee

THE NATIONAL  
RECONCILIATION PROGRAMME

The NRP Programme Committee (PC) comprises of political leaders from various political and ethnic organisations. It is not a new political front, alliance or organisation.

The task of the PC is to facilitate activities in order that various political groups are able to discuss political matters of mutual concern within a single nationality or between various nationalities through consultations and dialogue, conflict resolution and capacity building endeavours. In other words, the PC functions as a body to facilitate efforts of various political organisations within the pro-democracy movement in their national reconciliation work, with a focus on policy direction, and programme facilitation and management.



NRP Programme Committee Meeting November 2008

The Programme Committee usually meets once every quarter or bi-annually to coordinate activities. Emergency meetings can be called as and when necessary. Political leaders who are not on the team are invited to PC meetings as and when necessary in order to enhance NRP programmes. Formal and informal consultations with various political organisations and NGOs are carried out. The objective is to consult with leaders in the democratic movement and to incorporate their thoughts, opinions and analyses on the situation in Burma as well as to assess the progress and relevance of the programmes that have been implemented and those that will be carried out in the future. Activities are recommended by the PC to the NRP Secretariat-Funding Committee in accordance with the aims and objectives of NRP and according to the strategy relevance of the activities and their goals.

## 2009 Programme Committee members:

- a** Salai Van Lian Thang - Chin State Representative
- b** Jonathan - Kachin State Representative
- c** Saw Tado Moh - Karen State Representative
- d** Khu Oo Reh - Karenni State Representative
- e** Saya Naing - Mon State Representative
- f** Sao Ood Kesi - Shan State Representative-1
- g** Yaw Na - Shan State Representative-2
- h** Aung Naing Soe - Nationalities Youth Forum Representative
- i** Naw San - Students and Youth Congress of Burma Representative
- j** Col. Hkun Okker - National Democratic Front Representative
- k** Dr. Lian Sakhong - United Nationalities League of Democracy-Liberated Area
- l** Saw David Taw - Ethnic Nationalities Council
- m** Mahkaw Hkunsu - Ethnic Nationalities Council
- n** U Thein Phay - Arakan State
- o** Lway Aye Nang - Women's League of Burma Representative
- p** Tin Tin Nyo - Women's League of Burma
- q** Naw Dah Ehkler - Women's League of Burma
- r** Dr. Kyaw Nyunt - Democratic Alliance of Burma

The Funding Committee is a mechanism where donors who provide the NRP with basket funds can meet and discuss common issues relating to the NRP, such as reporting process and audits. They usually meet at the same time as the Programme Committee and follow the decisions made by the NRP Programme Committee, but to date have never reversed any decisions made by the PC.

## Funding Committee members:

- a** Harn Yawng hwe, EBO
- b** Jack Sterken, EBO
- c** Heidi Ronne Moller, Danish Burma Committee
- d** Elaine Peterson, Canadian Lutheran World Relief - previous member





**Conclusion**





## Conclusion

Since the creation of EBO, the main achievement has been the foundation of a process where ethnic nationalities and traditionally disenfranchised communities are included in the political process domestically, regionally and internationally.

EBO definitely cannot claim any achievement as its own. The achievements and successes come from the beneficiaries of funds who themselves ensure that the activities are successful. All organisations work independently. The Euro-Burma Office programme is essentially a programme that facilitates, supports, consults, encourages and coordinates activities, but it implements very few activities itself.

This process is all part of an overall strategy - empowering disenfranchised communities to enter into the political process as equal partners, which leads to a more balanced, creative and dynamic democratic movement. The development of a democratic movement which celebrates and upholds the concept of unity through diversity will be essential for a future democracy in Burma.

In order to mobilize international support effectively, EBO has supported and facilitated the ethnic nationalities in reaching a consensus for a negotiated transition to democratic governance in Burma. Without practical domestic alternatives to military rule, the international community would not be able to provide any concrete support. EBO has assisted in forging a consensus amongst the seven ethnic states to work together and to take the initiative to rebuild the Union of Burma into a democratic and federal nation instead of each seeking its own independence.

EBO also helped forge a consensus amongst the civil society groups operating in Burma and those operating in exile or on the borders of Burma. In the past, these groups viewed each other with suspicion and even as enemies. The consensus now is that each group has a different and important role to play in the development of a democratic society in Burma.

Women and youth are now recognized by the Burmese democracy movement as valuable assets. They are now invited to serve in important political positions, and, although there is still work to be done in reaching gender parity, they make up at least 30% of every gathering.

Furthermore, EBO has also been successful in starting a process whereby the political leadership is beginning to plan for change instead of just opposing the SPDC regime. The ENC is now developing primary databases on education, health and agricultural resources and capacity in rural areas of Burma where no government services in these fields exist, and where the UN does not have access. The databases will be used to plan resource transfers to support these community services in order to consolidate any eventual transition in the future.

At the beginning of EBO's activities, the democracy movement tended to react to political developments in Burma, whereas it now increasingly works by anticipating and pro-actively taking steps to achieve desired outcomes.

Given the lack of opportunities for many Burmese young peoples to enter into formal higher education, EBO is currently supporting non-formal education and internships as an alternative. EBO is also exploring the possibility of a programme for Burmese (particularly ethnic) students to upgrade their skills to international standards. The need to build the capacity of young men and women is crucial if there is to be a sustainable transition to democracy.

EBO continues to make progress towards its main objectives. EBO has evolved in a very positive direction and played a key role in supporting a peaceful transition to democracy and the establishment of a federal union of Burma. Serious planning and programme development designed to consolidate and sustain the eventual transition to democratic governance has been started.

EBO's programme networks continue to expand exponentially. The major organisations supported by EBO are increasingly invited to give input into strategic, political and programme development at the most senior political and security levels of the UN, ASEAN, Thailand, China, India, Bangladesh, the OIC and the EU. UN OCHA and other multi-lateral agencies are actively seeking input and cooperation with NRP project holders. These phenomena reflect a significant change from project holders seeking the attention and attempting to lobby the international community to project holders being invited to have input.

EBO has emerged as the key facilitating body that can work with all sectors of the democratic movement, including the armed opposition, cease-fire groups, political organisations, civil society groups and all the major ethnic groups. EBO has provided a vehicle for building strong alliances, which has paved the way for ethnic groups to draft state constitutions and a federal constitution for Burma — one of the major achievements for Burmese democratic movement. The support of the work of the ethnic constitutional development committees has been important in creating a united ethnic stance in the constitutional debate. The draft state constitutions are studied by not only the ethnic nationality they are written for, but also among other ethnic nationalities for comments and suggestions. EBO also supports and encourages women's and youth organisations to ensure that a new constitution will have a proper gender perspective and will enhance the role and participation of women and young people in all areas of political, social and economic life.



# Organisations funded directly and indirectly by EBO / NRP (1997-2009):

## CONCLUSION

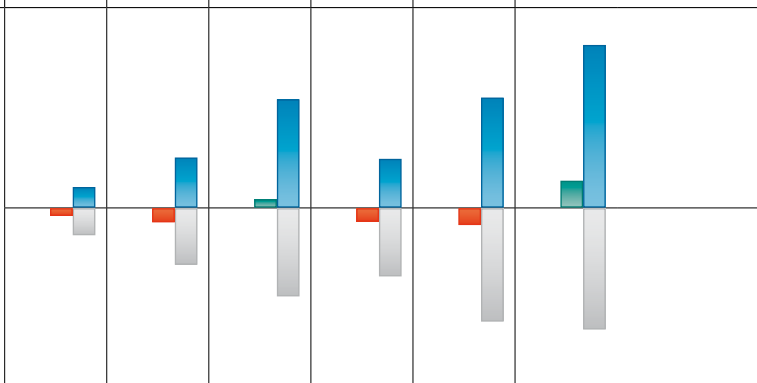
- 01 All Arakan Youth and Students Union
- 02 All Burma Federation of Student Unions
- 03 All Burma Muslim Union
- 04 All Burma Students Democratic Front
- 05 All Burma Young Monks Union
- 06 All Ethnic International Open University, Chiang Mai
- 07 All Kachin Students & Youth Union
- 08 *All Quiet on the Western Front* publication
- 09 Altsean – Alternate ASEAN Network
- 10 Andaman Legal Defence
- 11 Arakan Constitution Drafting Committee
- 12 Arakan Cultural Networking
- 13 Arakan History Workshop
- 14 Arakan Human Rights Documentation Unit
- 15 Arakan League for Democracy - LA
- 16 Arakan Liberation Party
- 17 Arakan National Council
- 18 Arakan Project
- 19 Arakan Rohingya Council
- 20 Arakan Rohingya National Organization
- 21 Arakan Youth, Bangladesh
- 22 ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Myanmar Caucus
- 23 Assistance Association for Political Prisoners
- 24 BA Research
- 25 *Beyond the Horizon* Project
- 26 *Bordering on Tyranny* video
- 27 Burma Bureau, Cologne, Germany
- 28 Burma Center Prague, Czech Republic
- 29 Burma Centrum Nederland, Amsterdam
- 30 Burma Constitution Study Group
- 31 Burma Day, Brussels
- 32 Burma Donors Forum
- 33 Burma Ethnic Research Group
- 34 Burma Fund, Washington DC
- 35 Burma Lawyers Council
- 36 Burma Medical Association
- 37 Burma Online Library
- 38 Burma Peace Foundation, Geneva, Switzerland
- 39 Burma Relief Centre
- 40 Burma Research Journal
- 41 Burma Rohingya Organization UK
- 42 Burmese Women Delhi
- 43 Burmese Women's Union
- 44 Canadian Friends of Burma
- 45 Chin Community – Germany
- 46 Chin Community – Norway
- 47 Chin Constitution Drafting Committee
- 48 Chin Cultural Networking
- 49 Chin Human Rights Organization
- 50 Chin English Project
- 51 Chin Forum
- 52 Chinland Guardian News
- 53 Chin National Front
- 54 Chin National Journal
- 55 Chin National Council
- 56 Chin National League for Democracy
- 57 Chin Students Literature Committee
- 58 Chin Students & Youth Forum
- 59 Christian Solidarity Worldwide
- 60 Community Action Network
- 61 Connect Burma
- 62 Civil-Military Consultation
- 63 Democratic Alliance of Burma
- 64 Democratic Party of Arakan
- 65 Democratic Party for New Society
- 66 Democratic Voice of Burma, Oslo, Norway
- 67 Education Research Project
- 68 Empowering Women Of Burma
- 69 Ethnic Forum, Toronto
- 70 Ethnic Nationalities Council
- 71 Ethnic Nationalities Solidarity and Cooperation Committee
- 72 European Burma Network
- 73 European Institute for Asian Studies
- 74 Federation of Trade Unions - Burma
- 75 First Rohingya Forum
- 76 Forum Asia, Bangkok, Thailand
- 77 Forum of Burmese in Europe
- 78 Fourth Generation Youth
- 79 Free Burma Coalition (West Coast), Seattle, USA
- 80 German Asian Foundation
- 81 Global Governance Centre, LSE
- 82 Grup Birmania, Belgium
- 83 Hope Project
- 84 Images Asia, Thailand
- 85 Info-Birmanie, Paris, France
- 86 Information Network of Burma
- 87 Information Network Research
- 88 Irrawaddy Magazine
- 89 Institute for Asian Democracy, Washington, DC, USA
- 90 Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand
- 91 Joint Action Committee – NDF/UNLD
- 92 Kachin American & Friends, Illinois, USA
- 93 Kachin Anti- Referendum Campaign
- 94 Kachin Cultural Networking
- 95 Kachin Development Committee
- 96 Kachin Development Group
- 97 Kachin Organization
- 98 Kachin Consultation
- 99 Kachin National Congress for Democracy
- 100 Kachin National Organisation
- 101 Kachin State Constitution Drafting Committee
- 102 Kachin Women's Association in Thailand
- 103 Kachin Women

<b>104</b>	Kaladan Press	<b>156</b>	Native Shans, Kachin State
<b>105</b>	Karen Buddhist-Christian dialogue	<b>157</b>	Network for Democracy and Development
<b>106</b>	Karen Cross-Border Dialogue	<b>158</b>	New Mon State Party
<b>107</b>	Karen Human Rights Group	<b>159</b>	Palaung Constitution Drafting Committee
<b>108</b>	Karen Information Committee	<b>160</b>	Palaung State Liberation front
<b>109</b>	Karen National Union	<b>161</b>	Palaung Youth Network Group
<b>110</b>	Karen National Unity Seminar	<b>162</b>	Pa-O People's Liberation Organization
<b>111</b>	Karen Service Team	<b>163</b>	Pa-O Youth Organization
<b>112</b>	Karen State Coordinating Body	<b>164</b>	Patriotic War Veterans of Burma
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<b>116</b>	Karenni Constitution Drafting Committee	<b>168</b>	Rakhaing Women's Union, Dhaka, Bangladesh
<b>117</b>	Karenni National Progress Party	<b>169</b>	Reading Through Karen Eyes
<b>118</b>	Karenni National Youth Organization	<b>170</b>	Research Group for the Economic Development of Burma
<b>119</b>	Karenni State Coordinating Office	<b>171</b>	Restoration Council of Shan State
<b>120</b>	Karenni Women's Organization	<b>172</b>	Rohingya Solidarity Organization
<b>121</b>	Kao Wao News	<b>173</b>	Thailand-Burma Border Consortium
<b>122</b>	Kaw Dai, Shan State	<b>174</b>	Shan Democratic Union
<b>123</b>	Kayan New Generation Youth	<b>175</b>	Shan Herald Agency for News
<b>124</b>	Kayan New Land Party	<b>176</b>	Shan Human Rights Foundation
<b>125</b>	Kuki Students' Democratic Front	<b>177</b>	Shan Karenni Youth
<b>126</b>	Kwe Ka Lu (Karen News)	<b>178</b>	Shan Literature Project
<b>127</b>	Lahu Coordinating Committee	<b>179</b>	Shan Minorities Project
<b>128</b>	Lahu Democratic Front	<b>180</b>	Shan Nationalities League
<b>129</b>	Lahu Women's Organization	<b>181</b>	Shan Youth Conference
<b>130</b>	Lahu Youth Development Organization	<b>182</b>	Shan Oral History Project
<b>131</b>	<i>Looking for Burma</i> Exhibition, Belgium	<b>183</b>	Shan Political Prisoners Project
<b>132</b>	Members of Parliament Union	<b>184</b>	Shan Relief Committee
<b>133</b>	Mizoram University, Aizawl, India	<b>185</b>	Shan Representative Committee
<b>134</b>	Mizzima News, New Delhi, India	<b>186</b>	Shan State Army
<b>135</b>	Mon Community Association	<b>187</b>	Shan State Constitution Drafting Committee
<b>136</b>	Mon Cultural Networking	<b>188</b>	Shan State Coordinating Committee
<b>137</b>	Mon Culture Project	<b>189</b>	Shan State School for Nationalities Youth
<b>138</b>	Mon History Conference	<b>190</b>	Shan State Youth Working Group
<b>139</b>	Mon State Coordinating Body	<b>191</b>	Shan Studies Conference
<b>140</b>	Mon Constitution Drafting Committee	<b>192</b>	Shan Women's Action Network
<b>141</b>	Mon National Development	<b>193</b>	Shan Youth Network Group
<b>142</b>	Mon Unity League	<b>194</b>	Strategy Consultation Committee
<b>143</b>	Mon Women's Organization	<b>195</b>	Students and Youth Congress of Burma
<b>144</b>	Mon Progressive Youth	<b>196</b>	Trans-National Institute, Amsterdam
<b>145</b>	Mongloi Web	<b>197</b>	Tampa Consultants
<b>146</b>	Mra People	<b>198</b>	United Nationalities
<b>147</b>	Naga Youth Organization	<b>199</b>	United Nationalities League for Democracy – Liberated Area
<b>148</b>	Narinjara News, Dhaka, Bangladesh	<b>200</b>	United Nationalities Youth League
<b>149</b>	National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma	<b>201</b>	Wa National Organization
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<b>151</b>	National Democratic Front	<b>203</b>	Women's League of Burma
<b>152</b>	National League for Democracy – Liberated Area	<b>204</b>	Women's League of Chinland
<b>153</b>	National Unity Party of Arakan	<b>205</b>	Women's Relief and Welfare Association of Burma, New Delhi
<b>154</b>	Nationalities Youth Development Programme	<b>206</b>	Yangon Documentary Project
<b>155</b>	Nationalities Youth Forum	<b>207</b>	Youth Exchange Programme



FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY

			1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
I N C O M E	Swedish International Development Agency	Sweden	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Danish Burma Committee	Denmark	0	0	0	173,800	246,900	279,300
	European Commission	EU	144,700	364,200	395,200	0	314,350	525,200
	Canadian Lutheran World Relief	Canada	0	0	327,200	0	220,000	386,650
	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Norway	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Trocaire	Ireland	0	0	45,200	64,050	30,000	12,750
	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung	Germany	0	0	0	64,450	0	0
	Norwegian Burma Council/Committee	Norway	0	0	18,600	22,900	0	0
	Associates to Develop Democratic Burma	Canada	0	0	1,200	5,750	0	0
	Institute for Public Administration	Ireland	0	0	0	12,800	0	0
	Evangelisches Missionswerks	Germany	0	0	10,700	1,250	0	0
	Dag Hammarskjold Foundation	Sweden	0	0	0	0	0	0
	National Endowment for Democracy	USA	0	0	0	9,650	0	0
	People in Need	Czech R	0	0	0	0	0	0
	National Coalition Government	Burma	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>			<b>144,700</b>	<b>364,200</b>	<b>798,100</b>	<b>354,650</b>	<b>811,250</b>	<b>1,209,900</b>



EXPENSES	Salaries	64,200	83,800	123,950	94,150	180,900	105,400
	Office Costs	18,950	37,000	32,750	27,350	30,600	53,400
	Evaluation Costs	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Audit Costs	0	0	0	0	0	10,000
	<b>Total Administration</b>	<b>83,150</b>	<b>120,800</b>	<b>156,700</b>	<b>121,500</b>	<b>211,500</b>	<b>168,800</b>
	National Reconciliation Programme	0	2,300	357,450	362,550	368,800	507,200
	EBO Activities/ Projects	77,700	280,900	133,500	15,650	232,850	192,550
	<b>Total Activities</b>	<b>77,700</b>	<b>283,200</b>	<b>490,950</b>	<b>378,200</b>	<b>601,650</b>	<b>699,750</b>
	Equipment	31,850	8,200	900	0	23,350	26,70
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES (Admin. + Activities + Equipment)</b>		<b>192,700</b>	<b>412,200</b>	<b>648,550</b>	<b>499,700</b>	<b>836,500</b>	<b>895,250</b>
<b>BALANCE</b>		(48,000)	(48,000)	149,550	(145,050)	(25,250)	308,650



2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Cumulative	
0	0	422,050	647,750	700,650	742,100	754,900	3,267,450	30.3%
265,900	256,600	279,950	304,850	304,850	304,850	285,600	2,706,600	25.1%
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,743,650	16.2%
16,600	0	361,200	17,250	333,350	2,350	0	1,664,600	15.4%
0	84,100	111,450	15,000	0	251,100	331,600	793,250	7.4%
52,100	65,150	0	0	36,900	0	0	306,150	2.8%
0	27,000	77,550	0	0	0	0	169,000	1.6%
9,300	0	0	0	0	0	0	50,800	0.5%
1,500	0	0	2,400	13,250	1,300	3,300	28,700	0.3%
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12,800	0.1%
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11,950	0.1%
10,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	10,000	0.1%
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9,650	0.1%
0	0	3,850	0	0	0	0	3,850	0.0%
0	0	1,300	0	0	0	0	1,300	0.0%
<b>355,400</b>	<b>432,850</b>	<b>1,257,350</b>	<b>987,250</b>	<b>1,389,000</b>	<b>1,301,700</b>	<b>1,375,400</b>	<b>10,775,750</b>	
26,300	213,000	54,500	137,150	151,350	242,650	212,400	1,689,750	16.5%
0,500	62,850	13,900	42,550	38,200	40,450	41,800	450,300	4.4%
0	22,500	0	0	0	0	0	22,500	0.2%
0	9,200	2,400	6,550	7,800	0	3,000	38,950	0.4%
<b>36,800</b>	<b>307,550</b>	<b>70,800</b>	<b>186,250</b>	<b>197,350</b>	<b>283,100</b>	<b>257,200</b>	<b>2,201,500</b>	
502,950	520,800	504,400	516,650	565,200	511,750	489,250	5,209,300	50.8%
20,000	304,000	26,750	219,100	369,300	393,400	382,050	2,647,750	25.8%
<b>522,950</b>	<b>824,800</b>	<b>531,150</b>	<b>735,750</b>	<b>934,500</b>	<b>905,150</b>	<b>871,300</b>	<b>7,857,050</b>	
0	41,850	0	13,800	8,750	39,700	10,050	205,150	2.0%
<b>559,750</b>	<b>1,174,200</b>	<b>601,950</b>	<b>935,800</b>	<b>1,140,600</b>	<b>1,227,950</b>	<b>1,138,550</b>	<b>10,263,700</b>	
(204,350)	(741,350)	655,400	51,450	248,400	73,750	236,850	512,050	

# Glossary

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<b>EBO</b>	———— Euro-Burma Office
<b>AASYC</b>	———— All Arakan Students and Youth Congress
<b>AKSYU</b>	———— All Kachin Students and Youth Union
<b>ANC</b>	———— Arakan National Council
<b>ASEAN</b>	———— Association of South East Asian Nations
<b>ADDB</b>	———— Associates to Develop Democratic Burma Inc
<b>CLWR</b>	———— Canadian Lutheran World Relief
<b>CSYF</b>	———— Chin Students & Youth Federation
<b>CDCs</b>	———— Constitution Drafting Committees
<b>ENC</b>	———— Ethnic Nationalities Council
<b>EC</b>	———— European Commission
<b>FES</b>	———— Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
<b>KSCB</b>	———— Karen State Coordinating Body
<b>KYO</b>	———— Karen Youth Organization
<b>KNYO</b>	———— Karenni National Youth Organization
<b>Kaw Dai</b>	———— Shan State Youth
<b>KNGY</b>	———— Kayan New Generation Youth
<b>JAC</b>	———— Joint Action Committee
<b>MYPO</b>	———— Mon Youth Progressive Organization
<b>NCGUB</b>	———— National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma
<b>NDF</b>	———— National Democratic Front
<b>NED</b>	———— National Endowment for Democracy
<b>NRP</b>	———— National Reconciliation Programme
<b>FT</b>	———— NRP Facilitating Team
<b>NY Forum</b>	———— Nationalities Youth Forum
<b>OIC</b>	———— Organisation of the Islamic Conference
<b>SSCDC</b>	———— Shan State Constitution Drafting Committee
<b>SWAN</b>	———— Shan Women's Action Network
<b>SYC</b>	———— Shan Youth Committee
<b>SYP</b>	———— Shan Youth Power
<b>SCDCs</b>	———— State Constitution Drafting Committees
<b>SPDC</b>	———— State Peace and Development Council (the Burmese military regime)
<b>SCM</b>	———— Strategic Consultation Meetings – ENC
<b>SCC</b>	———— Strategy Coordination Committee – ENC
<b>SYCB</b>	———— Students and Youth Congress of Burma
<b>SCSC</b>	———— Supporting Committee for State Constitutions
<b>Sida</b>	———— Swedish International Development Agency
<b>UN CEDAW</b>	———— United Nations Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
<b>UNGA</b>	———— United Nations General Assembly
<b>UNLD-LA</b>	———— United Nationalities League for Democracy – Liberated Area
<b>ULYO</b>	———— United Lahu Youth Organization
<b>WLB</b>	———— Women's League of Burma





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