



STICHTING CARE ♥ FOR CHILDREN

Annual Report 2025

Read our cry for help
on page 3 of this report!

Dear donors and sponsors...

We begin this annual report with a summary of the situation in Myanmar. This introduction draws from various sources, including articles by Minka Nijhuis and information from the websites of Amnesty International, Stichting Vluchteling, and the UN. We've supplemented our report with recent developments. It's anything but a cheerful story, but it must be told and demonstrates that our help is needed more than ever.



Brief history

In 1962, the military seized power in Myanmar and ruled with an iron fist until 2011. During the uprisings of 1988, Aung San Suu Kyi emerged. When the junta organized elections in 1990, her party, the National League for Democracy (NLD), won by a large majority. The junta did not recognize the election results and placed her under house arrest. She became a figurehead of freedom and democracy.

In 2010, the NLD won again, and a government under her leadership was established. From that point on, things improved in Myanmar. Although the military still held sway behind the scenes, there was more freedom. The previously closed country opened up: more tourists came, foreign companies invested, and the younger generation grew up with more freedom and opportunities.

In 2020, the NLD won again by a landslide, but the military feared losing power. Therefore, they staged a coup on February 1, 2021. Suu Kyi and other politicians were imprisoned. General Min Aung Hlaing declared himself leader of the country.

He is also responsible for the persecution of the Rohingya and other ethnic groups in Myanmar.



Civil war or popular uprising?

The younger generation, in particular, who had briefly tasted some freedom and democracy, rose up in revolt. The peaceful protests were brutally suppressed.

Although Myanmar is a patchwork of ethnic minorities and has a history of conflict, the armed conflict that erupted is anything but a civil war. It is a popular uprising! Old and new resistance groups are fighting - some united - against a common enemy: the Myanmar military.

Humanitarian crisis

The armed conflict led to a humanitarian crisis. The economy collapsed, resulting in a severe food crisis. The healthcare system is under severe strain due to outbreaks of diseases like COVID-19 and cholera.

In early 2025, a major earthquake struck the country in the Mandalay and Sagaing regions. According to the UN, 3,800 people were killed and 5,000 injured. 50,000 buildings and homes were severely damaged, and 200,000 people were left homeless. Many still live in makeshift shelters.

The combination of violence, poverty, disease, and the natural disaster makes the situation in Myanmar more dire than ever. Some facts at a glance:

- 22 of the 55 million inhabitants are dependent on aid;



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- 4.3 million people are internally displaced;
- 1.5 million people are fleeing (including to Bangladesh and Thailand).



The battle moves

Myanmar's ruling class is supported by its allies, China and Russia. They provide the junta with financial and military support, for example, by launching airstrikes on civilian targets like schools and hospitals. However, the military no longer has the upper hand everywhere. The countryside is largely in the hands of armed resistance groups. Fighting is increasingly taking place around the major cities.

The power of collaboration

After Suu Kyi and her colleagues were imprisoned by the military, the resistance groups established a new state. The Government of National Unity (NUG) was formed by a group of deposed representatives and their supporters. The government consists of 17 ministries. Some operate from within the states, others from neighbouring countries or from the West. President Duwa Lashi La resides in a liberated area in the north. The NUG is largely unknown internationally. Representatives exist in the West, but without official diplomatic status.



A federal state will be difficult to achieve in the future. Former politicians from Suu Kyi's party consider themselves the true leaders and show little willingness to cooperate and engage in democratic dialogue. This is why many young people and ethnic minorities have already lost faith in the NLD, Suu Kyi's party.

"Winning is the easiest part of the fight. The hardest part comes afterward," an activist writes in an article by Minka Nijhuis. He fears division, a lack of democratic institutions, and a lack of credible leadership. "We have to prepare for this now. We're already late."

Elections

Myanmar is currently holding elections. This should be the moment for the people to make their voices heard and change the regime. But in reality, there's no electable counter-narrative to the junta. The NLD is banned, the NUG is unrecognized, and the smaller parties are powerless to make a difference. Moreover, the law stipulates that 25% of the vote goes to the military. So voting is pointless. However, the military government is pressuring the population to vote anyway and bringing busloads of people to the polling stations. Employees of government organizations must be able to prove they voted, otherwise they'll be fired. And criticizing the elections is a criminal offense. A hopeless situation!

Spiral of poverty

The military oppression and the resulting popular uprising have led the country to the brink of collapse. Factories and shops were forced to close, hotels and restaurants lost customers, rural people were no longer allowed to sell their agricultural products in the city, and so on. Many people are unemployed, and day labourers have barely had any income in the past five years. Theft has become commonplace, something that's hardly in the nature of a Buddhist. International aid is barely allowed. Trade routes, money flows, energy supplies, and the internet are under the junta's control. The population has been abandoned to its fate.

Our position

Despite everything, as a foundation, we continue to focus on our two orphanages in Minethouk and strive to do so as best we can. We have no government involvement and we stay out of politics.



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EMERGENCY CALL - HELP US!

Before we provide a detailed report on the affairs of the two orphanages over the past year, we would like to focus on the financial position of the Care for Children Foundation.

A bit of history: The initiative to establish the Care for Children Foundation came from Cor Visser (†) in 2002. Cor passed away suddenly in December 2007. This was a great loss for the foundation. Because he spent an average of six months a year in Myanmar, he managed everything locally. Simon Goede (†) was the foundation's secretary for 18 years and, even after Cor Visser's death, managed all affairs in the Netherlands. Due to his physical condition, it was time to hand over the reins in 2019. At that time, the board consisted only of interim chair Maria Overmars and secretary/treasurer Simon Goede.

However, finding new board members proved difficult. Simon contacted the board of World Child Care, which has also been active in Myanmar for many years. After two intensive discussions, the board of that foundation agreed to take over the responsibilities of Care for Children.

Effective January 1, 2020, the board of both World Child Care and Care for Children consists officially of Lucas Harms (chairman), Nico Schoenmakers (secretary), and Camiel van der Heiden (treasurer). The permanent project volunteer is Frederique Schoenmakers - de Groot.



During discussions with the old board, the new board indicated it wanted to take over all responsibilities but would not be able to actively solicit donors, sponsors, or funds. This was because they were already fully occupied with the other foundation. At that time, Care for Children's financial position still looked good, with € 179,000 in the bank. In 2020, sponsorship income came from approximately thirty private donors from Landsmeer and the surrounding area, from the PKN Diocese in Landsmeer, and from friendly foundations. Even then, annual income was insufficient to cover expenses in Minethouk.

To sustain the operation of the two orphanages, approximately € 30,000 is needed annually. Income has gradually declined. This year, only € 8,000 was received. The Eekhoorn Foundation, which supported Care for Children annually, will cease to exist in 2025. The donor base from Landsmeer and the surrounding area is aging and shrinking. The foundation's equity will be € 89,000 on January 1, 2026.

If nothing changes, this means we can continue to support the project in Minethouk with a contribution of € 30,000 for another three years. After that, the money will run out. The consequence is that the orphanages will have to close and find alternative homes for 65 (orphaned) children. It also means that the four staff members will lose their jobs.

Orphanage father U Tet Tun and cook Daw Mya Sein have reached retirement age. We can give them a modest sum of money. U Bran Saing, a staff member of the boys' home, and Daw Nilar Aye, a staff member of the girls' home, will both have to find other work.

Previously, the two orphanages were able to generate some income by hosting tourists. But since the coronavirus crisis and the military coup, hardly any tourists have come to Myanmar. Moreover, inflation has risen to 400% in four years.

For us as board members, it's almost impossible to find new sponsors. We haven't been able to do that for the other foundation either. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, Myanmar has been in the news negatively for over eight years. This makes it difficult to find schools and organizations in the Netherlands willing to set up fundraising campaigns. Secondly, the coronavirus crisis and the wars in Europe have shifted the focus of supporting people in need from developing countries to Europe. That makes sense.

We often say to each other: If only there were two major sponsors willing to support us with € 10,000 annually. These could be donors, foundations, organizations, or businesses who know their money is being put to good use and are willing to support us selflessly for several years. This will help us get our operations running! Tet Tun and his staff are aware of the financial situation and are deeply concerned. As board members, this is also a matter of concern to us.

Can you help, do you know someone who could, or can you put us in touch with someone? Please let us know. Help us, and by doing so, the 65 (orphaned) children in Minethouk!



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Bright Spots

Amidst all the misery in Myanmar, we fortunately also see some silver linings. The population is incredibly resilient, has a strong will to survive, works hard, and is willing to help. Unlike many regions in Myanmar, the area around Inle Lake in the center of the country is relatively peaceful. This also applies to the village of Minethouk, where our two orphanages are located. The government school there was open year-round in 2025. This means that our 65 orphans were able to receive a full education. In addition, young people were able to explore their future and continue their education. More on that later.

Composition of the group

A total of 65 orphans, half-orphans, and children from very poor families now live in our orphanages. Last year, there were 95. Fortunately, our orphanage father, Tet Tun, was able to find alternative homes for 30 children.

- Of the 35 girls in the girls' home, 20 are orphans and 13 are half-orphans. The other two have both parents, but their parents cannot care for them.
- Of the 30 boys in the boys' home, 10 are orphans and 15 are half-orphans. The other five have both parents, but their parents cannot care for them.



The girl group



The boy group



The Staff

For a foundation to function effectively, you need to be able to rely on your local staff. We are fortunate that this collaboration is excellent. The girls and boys in the two orphanages form a warm and close-knit community. Everything runs smoothly. There's discipline, but also time for fun. The children all have their own tasks and are very helpful. The staff has consisted of the following for many years:



U Tet Tun
Orphanage father
and head of both houses



Daw Mya Sein
Cook for both houses



U Bran Saing
Staff of the boys' home,
Tasks: computer teacher,
supervision and health



Daw Nilar Aye
Staff of the girls' home,
Tasks: math teacher,
supervision, health and garden

Project volunteers

Due to the military coup, no foreigners are coming to Myanmar anymore. Consequently, we haven't been able to welcome volunteers to Minethouk since 2020. This is a shame, because they organized fun activities and developed new initiatives. For the children, their visits were always a joy. Hopefully, this will be possible again in the future.

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The Girls' Home

To give you an idea of the girls' home and the surrounding area, we've added some images to this annual report. The photos below show the girls' home. The children are about to go to the government school, which is located in the village of Minethouk.



Next to the building is the kitchen, where meals are prepared daily for both the girls and the boys. The older girls take turns helping our cook, Daw Mya Sein. It's a fun and friendly atmosphere.



The kitchen at the girls' orphanage is dark. The children often choose to do their preparations outside, such as chopping vegetables.



Rice, meat, fish, and oil are purchased at the local market. Fruits and vegetables often come from their own gardens. There's ample space around the houses to grow these. Because the houses are situated on the shores of Inle Lake, the soil is fertile, resulting in high yields.



The girls enjoy helping Daw Nilar Aye with the gardening. The boys do it all, too. They do everything: digging, planting, watering, weeding, and harvesting.



The girls all eat together in the large dining room, which is located next to the girls' home's kitchen. Before the meal, there's a moment of silence, and the children give thanks for what they deserve. Both Buddhist and Christian children live in the orphanages. The children treat each other and the staff with respect.



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The boys' house is within walking distance of the girls' house. Both houses are very similar in construction. The building has several large rooms where the boys can study, use the computer, relax, and watch television.



When children attend government schools, they wear school uniforms. This is common practice in all schools in Myanmar. It ensures that everyone is equal and looks well-groomed. In orphanages, children simply wear casual clothes.

The children sleep in large dormitories with bunk beds. They each have a chest with clothes and personal belongings.



Tutoring

The girls and boys receive daily tutoring in subjects including English, reading, math, and computer use. In addition to a tutoring room, there is also a computer lab where instruction can be provided.

The boys' Home



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What is special in Myanmar is that the girls often speak slightly better English and are less shy than the boys.

High school diploma

In March 2025, two students graduated from high school and received their diplomas.

Vocational trainings

Five girls and two boys participated in vocational training in 2025. In the Netherlands, this would be called a vocational internship. The girls interned in a clothing workshop, where they learned to sew and weave. The boys worked in a workshop where scooters are repaired.



Studying at university

Girls and boys who are good at learning can attend university in Taunggyi City. There are several options available. One girl is currently in her second year at the medical university in Taunggyi City. One boy is in his first year at the technical university there. Three girls are studying at a part-time university.

Tuition fees have risen dramatically in Myanmar. It is crucial that we can continue to support children's education.

Leisure activities

Of course, there's also time for recreation. The girls and boys enjoy playing soccer, swimming, gymnastics, singing, drawing, crafting, playing computer games, and watching television. Children's birthdays are also celebrated.



Future plans

The orphanage father sends us his future plans and dreams every year. Some things are feasible, while others are unfortunately not.

We are happy to accommodate your maintenance requests. As a foundation, we believe it's important that both orphanages and their outbuildings remain in good condition. Because major maintenance was carried out in 2022, only minor repairs were required in subsequent years.

A number of ceilings are now due for replacement. This includes part of the ceiling in the boys' house and the ceiling of the kitchen next to the girls' orphanage. The orphanage father is having quotes prepared.

As a foundation, we can no longer afford this maintenance, but it is important that the houses remain safe. Therefore, investments will be necessary in the coming year.



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Financial situation in 2025

It's becoming increasingly difficult to transfer money to Myanmar without military intervention. The military is unhappy that schools and orphanages are receiving donations from foreign NGOs. They fear this supports the rebel insurgency. Fortunately, in 2025, we were able to transfer money to the foreign bank account of the PDO High School in Mandalay. The school then transferred the money to the account of the orphanages in Minethouk.

Income Netherlands

- Regular sponsors € 3,340
- Individual donations € 615
- Eekhoorn Foundation (last time) € 4,000

Local income

- Donations from tourists and guests € 250
- Donations from former students € 1,900
- Contribution Social Welfare Department € 3,653

Total income in 2025 € 13,758

Expenditures Netherlands

- Total local costs for two orphanages (salaries, necessities, education) € 25,000
- Overhead costs € 927

Total expenditure in 2025 € 25,927

Difference in income and expenditure in the Netherlands

In 2025, the difference between the Netherlands' income and expenditure was **€ 17,972**. This amount was taken from the foundation's equity.



Accountability

Because our foundation is run by enthusiastic volunteers, we have no salary costs, no travel expenses, and low overhead.

This way, we strive to keep things as transparent as possible for you. Every euro donated is worth a whopping 97 cents on-site. By spending the raised sponsorship money locally, we not only help the children but also support local businesses. Because everything in Myanmar is inexpensive by Western standards, we purchase everything locally. Our staff works with local businesses that are not affiliated with the government.

Our conviction

We can't change the world, but on a small scale, we can make a big difference for each other. And no, we can't help everyone, but everyone can help someone. That's our belief, our wish, and our New Year's resolution.

The Care for Children foundation has plenty of work to do in the coming years. The two orphanages in Minethouk deserve our financial support. However, we can't provide that support without the help of donors, sponsors, and foundations in the Netherlands.

You read our cry for help on page 3. We can only support the orphanages for three more years, and then it's over. If you can help us in any way, please contact us. Thank you in advance for your support, help, advice, and interest in 2026!

We wish you a happy, healthy, inspiring, and peaceful 2026!

Care for Children

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SUPPORT OUR PROJECT !

As a foundation, we rely on one-time and annual donations from individuals, foundations, organizations, and businesses. Every contribution, large or small, is welcome!

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