



**Expression & Voices  
of Displaced Children and Youth  
from the Confluence Region**

01 January 2016 – 31 January 2017

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Detail of Children's Art

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## I. Introduction

The Myitsone Dam construction has grievously impacted the lives of communities that inhabit the Confluence Region. The enforced relocation from ancestral homesteads to unfamiliar locations has meant economic, social and cultural devastation for the predominantly agrarian population. The lack of adequate arable land at the new locations has led to a significant reduction in income, and the abrupt change in environment with its resultant disruption of long held cultural and religious traditions have aggravated adjustment problems for both the young and old. Parents are traumatized by the loss of land and income, and beset with fears that their children would become disconnected from the old ways. The youth wander aimlessly through the bleak landscape, becoming prone to alcohol and drug abuse, and prey to human trafficking, and risky outward migration for labor.

In response to the psychosocial needs of the parents and children living in the relocated villages, Airavati introduced the art project, “Expression & Voices of Displaced Children and Youth from the Confluence Region”, in January 2016. The project involved interviewing the parents, urging them to describe the changes they had gone through due to

the relocation. The younger generation was encouraged to express the changes in their communities and their feelings towards them through a variety of art forms. The aim is to help them understand, inherit, and record communal memories, and envision and build up a healthy and peaceful future in the relocated areas.

In the course of the project, stories that emerged from the interviews were selected, and used as topics for art activities. School teachers were trained on how to work with children using artistic methods. Currently there are 894 children in 6 relocated schools in the Confluence Region. All the children were involved in the art programme, with 200 of them continuously taking part in creating art for one year. Their paintings were collected, and exhibitions held. The programme has been documented by art work, photos, reports and a culminating documentary film.

## II. Programme Overview

### 2.1 Background

The Confluence Region called Myitsone is located about 42 kilometres north of Myitkyina, the capital city of Kachin State, Myanmar. It is formed from the two headstreams (Mali Kha River and N’Mai Kka River) of the Ayeyarwaddy River. Myitkyina is the northernmost river port and railway terminus in Myanmar. This is the implementation area for the Oxfam Novib supported programme: Expression & Voices of Displaced Children and Youth from the Confluence Region.

The art programme covers the four villages most affected by the dam construction – Tanghppe, Mazup, Lahpre and Dawngpan – forcibly relocated to the new villages of Aung Min Thar and Mali Yang beginning March, 2013.

The forced relocation has raised issues including limited land for livelihood activities, inadequate facilities for education, health and transportation, lack of capital and agricultural support, political conflict, limited access to information and knowledge, negative impact of gold mining, and psychological problems of enforced relocation.

Airavati has also implemented ECCD and Livelihood supporting projects in these four most affected villages. The art programme is based on the experience and outcomes of the art programme implemented for displaced IDP children in the border regions.

### 2.2 Goal and Objectives

#### Goal

The goal of the art programme is to creatively encourage the younger generation of the Confluence Region to overcome displacement through artistic expression and engage them in inheriting the culture and memories of the communities and building up healthy and peaceful societies in the relocated areas.

#### Objectives

1. To encourage the younger generation to understand, inherit and record the social memories and history of their communities by creating art.
2. To provide psychosocial support and healing opportunities for children, youth and the wider displaced communities through the arts.
3. To share the art creations of children and youth by exhibitions in their communities and countrywide to advocate the national impact and resonance of their personal and community narratives.

### 2.3 Location and Participants

#### Implementation location

- The two relocation areas: Aung Min Thar Village and Mali Yang(Dawngpan) Village
- The two old village sites: Tanghppe Village and Mazup Village

SN	Name of the school	Relocated/Original	Number of children	Number of the participant children for art activities	Number of the activity groups
1	Mazup Primary School	Relocated in Aung Min Thar in 2010	125	30	1
2	Lahpe Primary School	Relocated in Aung Min Thar in 2011	43	30	1
3	Aung Min Thar Primary School	Relocated in Aung Min Thar in 2010	180	30	1
4	Tanghppe RC Primary School	Newly built in old Tanghppe Village in 2011 to meet the needs of the households that took the risk and moved from Aung Min Thar back to the old village.	22	22	1
5	Mali Yang (Dawngpan) Primary School	Relocated in Mali Yang Village in 2010	84	30	1
6	Aung Min Thar High School	Relocated in Aung Min Thar in 2010	440	50	2
		<b>Total</b>	<b>894</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>7</b>

Table 1—distribution and percentages of participant children

#### Participants

There are 6 schools with 894 children in the target location. 200 children will be selected through painting as participants of the programme within one year. The distribution and percentages of participant children are shown in Table 1.

## 2.4 Programme Components

In order to achieve the goal and the objectives of the art programme, detailed components have been designed so as to make the expression and voices of children and youth be heard, and heal the children and their family of the trauma of relocation.

The details of the components are as below.

### STORY-COLLECTING INTERVIEWS ON THE RELOCATED VILLAGERS AS BASELINE SURVEY

It is to get to know the background of the target communities, the history and culture, the life of people and the changes. Through interviews, the important stories will be collected.

### DEVELOPING CURRICULUM

Five topics will be developed for the art activities of the children from the findings of the villagers' interviews. A relevant curriculum will be worked out as a one-year art plan for the participant children.

### ONE PAINTING CLASS WITH ALL SCHOOL CHILDREN TO SELECT THE PARTICIPANT CHILDREN

One painting class will be conducted among all 894 children from six relocated schools, through which, 200 children will be selected as participants for the one year art programme.

### ART ACTIVITIES OF CHILDREN

Based on 5 topics, art activities will be conducted in the six schools with the 200 participant students through one year.

### CAPACITY BUILDING OF THE ART TEACHERS

Airavati will recruit two art teachers who will be trained by Airavati to lead the art activities.

### CAPACITY BUILDING OF THE SCHOOL TEACHERS

The teachers from the six relocated schools will be trained on how to conduct activities with children through various forms of art.

### COMMUNITY-LEVEL EXHIBITIONS

These will be conducted during the project process. The purpose is to share the progress of the project with the target communities and to link the knowledge and emotional feelings of adults and children.

### CULMINATING ART EXHIBITION IN MYITKYINA CITY AND OTHER POSSIBLE EXHIBITIONS

The culminating exhibition will be held in Myitkyina City in the end of the programme to share the achievements of the project and to let out of the concerns and hopes of the relocated population with the general public.

### DOCUMENTATION

The project will take photos of all the paintings produced by the children. The process of the art project will be recorded and edited into a 5-minute culminating video. Two 4-minute-long video clips will be produced during the progress of the project.

## 2.5 Implementation Schedule

In order to accomplish the components of the project, an implementation schedule was set for the period January-December, 2016.

- January, 2016: Preparation period, including intensive trainings for the two Art Teachers, and the baseline story-collecting interviews on the relocated villagers.
- February, 2016: Developing period, including the development of the curriculum, turning the collected stories of the communities into the topics of the art activities for children.
- March, 2016: One painting class with all school children and select the participant children for the project.
- April, 2016: Continuing the painting class with all school children and select the participant children for the project.
- May, 2016: Preparing and transporting the needed art materials to Myitkyina, working out the art activity schedule.
- June, 2016: Communicating the target schools, confirming the art activity schedule and confirming the groups of the participant children.
- July, 2016: Starting the art activities with the participant children according to the developed curriculum and providing a teachers' training.
- August, 2016: Conducting the art activities with children, providing the second intensive training for the school teachers and hold the community-level exhibition.

- September, 2016: Conducting the art activities with children.
- October, 2016: Conducting the art activities with children.
- November, 2016: Conducting the art activities with children, taking photos of the children's paintings, holding the second community-level exhibition.
- December, 2016: Filming and editing project documentary, holding the culminating exhibition of the project, providing the final teachers' training, writing and submitting the final report.

## 2.6 The Expected Outcomes

The table shows the expected outcomes of the project and the indicators and means of verifying the expected outputs.

EXPECTED RESULTS	INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
<b>Project Scale</b>	Number of participating youth, teachers who attend training, artists, individuals and organisations that attended the exhibitions	Record the number of works by youth and survey participants for firsthand accounts of the experience's impact.
<b>Work Produced</b>	800 paintings, 2000 photos and 20 sculptures created by participating youth.	Document the name, title, and date of completion of each work of art.
<b>Capacity building trainings for teachers</b>	Provide 6 intensive trainings on designing and conducting art and cultural activities among youth for the teachers from the relocated areas.	Record the processes of trainings and work of teachers by photos and writings.
<b>Documentation</b>	Two 4-minute video clips and one 5-minute culminating video.	Show the videos and the documentary film in participant communities and during exhibitions. It will also be distributed to the international audience.
<b>Public Engagement</b>	Two community-level exhibitions and one culminating exhibition in Myitkyina featuring the works of the displaced youth. These activities will also invite other stakeholders to share issues related to youth development in these communities.	The exhibitions will be documented.
<b>Disseminating the project outcomes</b>	Besides exhibiting the original works, digital copies of the paintings will be distributed widely to the diasporas so that the images could be printed in their original size in high resolution for exhibitions in other parts of the world.	These extended exhibitions of the printed works could be documented by photos and writings and available through internet.
<b>Assessment and Future Activities</b>	Identifying further areas of need for the target population. Identifying potential partners and fundraising for the next year.	During the exhibitions, T-shirts printed with children's paintings will be sold. Through promoting the exhibitions, the project can identify potential partners for future collaboration. One such possibility is to identify partner organisations that are interested in sponsoring exhibitions to other international locations that would further expand the project's impact.

Table 2—Expected Outcomes

### III. Implementation and Achievements of the Art Programme

#### 3.1 Outcomes of the Art Programme

Airavati started the art programme in the Confluence Region in January, 2016. Approximately 60 relocated villagers were interviewed. 894 children from the 6 relocated schools of Myitsone attended one painting class provided by the project. 210 children (108 boys and 102 girls) were selected as participants of the one-year art project. Art activities of the selected five topics have all been accomplished and over 1,200 paintings have been collected. 3 intensive teachers’ trainings have been conducted. 2 community-level exhibitions and 1 culminating exhibition in Myitkyina City have been successfully organized. Over 3,000 photos have been taken and one 13-minute-long documentary film has been completed.

Village	Number of Attendants	Description of Attendants	Time of Relocation
Mali Yang Village	32	Interviewed twice, 4 women and 12 men; 14 villagers who were relocated from Dawngpan Village to Mali Yang and 2 original villagers from Mali Yang	Relocated for over 6 years
Aung Min Thar Area	12	6 women and 6 men, who were relocated from Tanghpri Village and Mazup Village to Aung Min Thar Area.	Relocated for over 6 years
Old Tanghpri Village	12	6 women and 6 men, who took the risk and returned to the old village from Aung Min Thar, before their land and houses were left empty for too long.	Returned to the old village in 2011
Mazup Village	4	1 woman and 3 men, who took the risk and returned to the old Mazup village from Aung Min Thar.	Returned to the old village in 2011
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>		

Table 3—Story-collecting Interviews

#### 3.2 Implemented Activities

##### 3.2.1 Baseline Interviews on the Relocated Families and Villages

In January, 2016, the baseline story-collecting interviews on the relocated families and villagers have been conducted in the four most affected villages displaced from the Confluence Region. A total of four intensive group interviews have been conducted. 60 relocated villagers have been interviewed. The important stories of the project area have been collected.

The interviews focused on specific examples and facts of the difficulties encountered in the relocated people’s daily lives. The conversation was started by some specific questions about the changes of life. The main issues raised by the relocation include limited living resources and livelihood opportunities, disruption of the traditional living environment, the increased needs for cash, deficient facilities for education, health and transportation, security issues for villagers living in the old villages, outward migration and depopulation, and increased high risk behaviors of young people.

To earn cash, the villagers started to migrate out, especially the young people who left the area to seek for better job opportunities. With their limited education, they could only find the lowest level jobs with limited salaries and get exposed to high risk behaviors, such as alcohol and drug abuse, and human trafficking. The population of the village has decreased as a result.

Some important stories have been collected from the interviews.

##### Story 1

The paddy rice field – narrated by a relocated woman from Mazup Village

“When I was young, my mother did sloping agriculture. The harvest was always very good. There were so many paddies to carry that my mother had to rent an elephant to help with transportation. Our field was surrounded by streams and bamboo trees. We used the stream water to irrigate the crops. Every year when the paddy planting season started, we cooked in the field with our relatives and friends and had a big feast together. There were always fish, shrimps and little crabs in the streams. When the paddies ripened, the field would turn yellow and golden. The birds and deer loved to come in the harvest season. We built the fence around the field with bamboo. Those days so delightful, will never come back again...”

##### Story 2

The opening ceremony of the dam construction – narrated by a relocated man from Lahpe Village

“The picture stays in my mind. I cannot get rid of it. My heart still hurts when I think of it. It is a moment that happened in the opening ceremony of the dam construction. All the giant machines and excavators were in front of our field and village. All the villagers had to attend the ceremony. At the specific moment when the ceremony formally began, all the excavators were driven into our village and uprooted our crops, bamboos, fruit trees and houses. It was heart-breaking. However, we were required to clap our hands as celebration.

There were armed persons around us. We had to follow what we were told to do. Until now, I still feel clearly the strange combination of the applause and the pain in my heart. I will never forget it.”

“...Until now, I still feel clearly the strange combination of the applause and the pain in my heart. I will never forget it.”

##### Story 3

Farewell to the old village – narrated by a man from Mazup Village

“From the day when we were informed of the plan to the actual relocation, it was less than three months. In the last few months, we were frustrated and anxious and were not doing any more farming. On the last afternoon before being relocated, we held a farewell prayer meeting at our home, praying to God before we left our land. I had the opportunity to give a presentation at the meeting. My feelings were so complicated. It was painful. When I started to speak, I totally lost control. The faces of my fellow villagers were submerged in my tears. I will never forget that moment.”

When this picture was described, the interview meeting had gone on for three hours already. The villagers got more active to tell their unforgettable memories.

“...My feelings were so complicated. It was painful. When I started to speak, I totally lost control...”

##### Story 4

The first footstep to leave the home village – narrated by a man from Mazup Village

“We were required to leave at the specific date and time. A family was selected as the first one to leave at nine o’clock that morning. The head of that family was an old lady. She was required to step out her right foot first at 9 o’clock and walk straight without turning her head back. It was hard for her to leave. Then some persons started to push her roughly. We did not know how they set the time and chose the first family to leave. We were forced to leave, but why force it in such a violent way? The picture is so deep inside me. Until now I cannot understand it.”

##### Story 5

The children floating on the river

There are 6 schools in the relocated area, among which there is only one high school in Aung Min Thar. High school children of Mali Yang Village have to cross the river by boat every day to attend school. The picture of the children floating on the river can be seen every day in this area.

**Story 6**

**The fading memories**

The interviewees expressed that the land of the relocation area is very dry and difficult to plant things. There is no appropriate environment to pasture cattle. The relocation area is away from the river. People have difficulties in meeting the basic needs of daily life. The difficulties in the relocation area often remind them of the old villages. The more they memorize the old life, the more frustrated and anxious they are. However, it would be even worse if these memories were lost for the future generation.

**Story 7**

**Hope to return**

When asked whether they would choose to return to the old village if there was ever a choice, most of the interviewees remained silent. For the relocated villagers, their paddy fields, land and houses in the old villages have been destroyed and occupied by the dam construction site. To return to the old villages is as hard as to stay in the relocation villages. However, the villagers expressed that the Confluence is the heart of the Irrawaddy River and the heart of Kachin State, as it is the fourth and final settlement the ancestors of the Kachin people made in their migration route. Therefore, the significance of the Confluence is irreplaceable in the history, culture, environment and daily life of the Kachin people. After having lost their villages once, they have learned to cherish them more and hope to be able to return one day.

**3.2.2 Art Activity Design**

An important aspect of the art programme is to discover certain topics from the stories collected during the interviews and design story-telling art activities in keeping with the topics. Each art activity presents a topic that is most related to the experiences and lives of children. The topics range from culture and history to the experiences of the children, such as the changes in family and village, the loss of land, life in the relocated villages and their feelings and thoughts about the future.

Five topics have been selected from the interviews. These five topics represent the five chapters of the project year.



**Topic 1**

**Our Roots**

“We didn’t have our own ethnic writing. Our culture was orally inherited. When I was young, my grandfather let me sit on his legs and sang me the old songs. I remember he was singing different words each time. Although the music was the same, the lyrics always represented what was in his heart at that moment. The old songs tell us we were from the mountains which were snow-capped throughout the year. Our roots are in the mountains. Our culture, wisdom and memories all originated from the mountains.”

— Interview of a mother from Myitsone

**Topic 2**

**Our Beloved Homeland Myitsone**

“Since we moved to the new village, I think of our old village often, especially when I found life is not easy. My children are growing up. I am worried my children would not remember our old village. I even fear that someday I would forget how my village was. It is important to remember what our homeland and village looks like, smells like, sounds like, tastes like and feels like. I hope my children can inherit the precious memories.”

— Interview of a mother from Myitsone

**Topic 3**

**The Day: The Clapping Hands**

“On the day when the huge machines entered the village, we were all made to be present and to watch. The machines destroyed the fields, the bamboo and the crops in such a short time. We were made to keep watching and to clap our hands while it all happened. An old person of the village went crazy after that day. I can still feel sorrow and fear up to now when I recall that day.”

— Interview of a father from Myitsone

**The Day: Noah’s Ark**

“On the day when we moved from our old village to the relocated village, there was so much anxiety, worries and sorrows. We had to get all family members safely on to the boat, the old people and the children, and put the livestock and all things that were possible to take on the boat. And we were required to move in a strictly limited time. With that boat, we floated to the new place that we didn’t know anything about. It still feels like a dream to me.”

— Interview of a father from Myitsone



**Topic 4**

**The Awaiting Homeland**

*“I was sad when I went back to see our old village. The roads disappeared in the bushes. The crops and fruit trees are gone. The houses broken down. Humans can hold, hide and let out emotions and feelings. Nature and the environment also have feelings that need to be heard and cared about. It’s hard to imagine how the old village and home are awaiting our return and the living warmth of life. The grey and the black of the windows and doors of our old village often come to my mind.”*

— Interview of a father from Myitsone

**Topic 5**

**Children Floating on River**

*“I live in Mali Yang. I go to school at Aung Min Thar. It is the only high school in the relocated area. I take the boat every day to cross the river. Every day, I float once with my friends. We are floating on the river, and also floating in life, floating into the future that we do not see.”*

— Interview of a young people from Myitsone



**3.2.3 Art Activities**

According to the five topics, relevant art activities have been designed and conducted among the 210 participant children since July, 2016.

The 210 participant children from the 6 target schools were divided into 7 groups. To complete each topic, the project team had to conduct 7 activities, 1 activity with each group. A total of 35 activities have been conducted from July-December, 2016. Over 1,200 paintings have been collected (Please see table 4).

Various materials including acrylic colors, mud, water and crayon sticks were used by the children in the art works.

The landscape of the Confluence is rich and beautiful with abundant resources and materials. The programme looked for natural materials from the environment, such as the sand, stones and the soaked wood from the river, and used them with children to make art. Furthermore, the deepest memories and experiences that came out of the interviews with the relocated villagers were used as themes for the art activities. This creatively integrated the knowledge and memories of the parents with the understanding and emotions of the children.

In introducing the five topics to the children, the art teachers explained that all villagers have the responsibility to preserve memories of the old villages. The art teachers encouraged the children to tell these memories and the impact they make through art work. The oral narratives and the painting processes provided healing opportunities for children and youth to release their worries, anxieties, confusion and fears.

DATE	VILLAGE/SCHOOL	PARTICIPANTS			TOPIC	FACILITATORS
		MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL		
25.7.2016	Aung Min Thar/Primary school	16	16	32	Topic 1	Seng Bu, Min Zai Dau Hkawng, Ja Bran, Seng Naw
26.7.2016	Aung Min Thar/Primary school	12	15	27	Topic 2	
26.7.2017	Aung Min Thar/H.S/Middle school	8	8	16	Topic 1	
1.8.2016	Aung Min Thar/H.S/Middle school	8	8	16	Topic 2	
8.8.2016	Aung Min Thar/H.S/High school	11	13	24	Topic 1	
1.8.2016	Aung Min Thar/H.S/High school	13	13	26	Topic 2	
30.7.2016	Aung Min Thar/Primary school (1)	18	20	38	Topic 1	
3.8.2016	Aung Min Thar/Primary school (1)	18	20	38	Topic 2	
26.7.2016	Aung Min Thar/Primary school (2)	13	12	25	Topic 1	
2.8.2016	Aung Min Thar/Primary school (2)	10	14	24	Topic 2	
28.7.2016	Tanghpri/ Primary school	7	10	17	Topic 1	
4.8.2016	Tanghpri/ Primary school	8	10	18	Topic 2	
29.7.2016	Dawngpan/Primary school	26	15	41	Topic 1	
14.8.2016	Dawngpan/Primary school	21	15	36	Topic 2	
25.8.2016	Tanghpri Primary students	8	12	20	Topic 3	Kaw Seng, Tu Hkawng, Naw Awn, Seng Naw, Ja Bran, Min Zai
29.8.2016	H.S/ Aung Min Thar/Primary school	18	17	35	Topic 3	
29.8.2016	H.S/ Aung Min Thar/Middle school	6	8	14	Topic 3	
30.8.2016	Aung Min Thar/ Primary school	12	13	25	Topic 4	Naw Awn, Ja Bran, Seng Naw
31.8.2016	Aung Min Thar/ Primary school	20	18	38	Topic 4	Kaw Seng, Tu Hkawng, Naw Awn, Seng Naw, Ja Bran, Min Zai
6.9.2016	Aung Min Thar/ Primary school	14	16	30	Topic 3	Naw Awn, Ja Bran, Seng Naw
7.9.2016	Aung Min Thar/ Primary school	17	20	37	Topic 3	
8.9.2016	Tanghpri Primary school	8	13	21	Topic 4	
19.9.2016	H.S/ Aung Min Thar/ Primary school	22	15	37	Topic 4	
19.9.2016	H.S/ Aung Min Thar/High school	9	7	16	Topic 4	
22.9.2016	Dawngpan Primary school	19	16	35	Topic 3	
23.9.2016	Dawngpan Primary school	19	16	35	Topic 4	

### 3.2.4 School Teachers' Training

DATE	VILLAGE/SCHOOL	PARTICIPANTS			TOPIC	FACILITATORS
		MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL		
26.9.2016	H.S/ Aung Min Thar/ Middle school	12	13	25	Topic 4	Kaw Seng, Tu Hkawng, Naw Awn, Seng Naw, Ja Bran, Min Zai
26.9.2016	H.S/ Aung Min Thar/High school	13	11	24	Topic 3	Naw Awn, Ja Bran, Seng Naw
17.11.2016	Tanghpre Primary school	7	10	17	Topic 5	
18.11.2016	Dawngpan Primary school	26	15	41	Topic 5	
21.11.2016	H.S/ Aung Min Thar/ Primary school	16	16	32	Topic 5	
21.11.2016	H.S/ Aung Min Thar/ Middle school	8	8	16	Topic 5	
22.11.2016	H.S/ Aung Min Thar/ Primary school	18	20	38	Topic 5	
23.11.2016	H.S/ Aung Min Thar/High school	12	15	27	Topic 5	

Table 4—Art Activities from July to December 2016

DATE	ACTIVITIES	PARTICIPANT VILLAGES	PARTICIPANTS		
			MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
27.7.2016	Teachers' training on Topic 1 and Topic 2	Aung Min Thar, Dawngpan	1	14	15
26.8.2016	Teachers' training on Topic 3	Tanghpre, Aung Min Thar, Dawngpan, Lung Ga Zup	2	14	16
Morning, 14.1.2017	Teachers' training on Topic 4	Aung Min Thar, Dawngpan, Tanghpre	1	7	8
Afternoon, 14.1.2017	Teachers' training on Topic 5	Aung Min Thar, Dawngpan, Tanghpre	1	7	8

Table 5—Intensive Training Sessions from July 2016 to January 2017

In order to make the art activities sustainable and reach more children in the relocated area, intensive training sessions have been provided for the school teachers. A total of four intensive training sessions were conducted and five courses provided during the training.

During the first teachers' training in July, 2016, the teachers were all very shy and constrained and said that they could not paint. At the third training in January, 2017, the teachers showed the same change as the participant children, enjoying painting with various materials without hesitation. All of them were more confident than before when making art. These teachers are expected to further apply what they learned through the training and lead the art activities at their schools in the new project year. After attending the last training session, the teachers all expressed the training had been very creative and supportive, and that they hoped to be further supported by the project to continue art activities with more children at their schools in future.



### 3.2.5 Art Exhibitions

The third objectives of the art programme is to share the children's art creations by holding exhibitions in their communities, and then countrywide to share their personal and community narratives. In order to achieve the objective, Airavati held two community-level exhibitions in the relocated villages in Myitsone, two exhibitions in Yangon, and one culminating exhibition in Myitkyina City. The participant children and teachers, the villagers of the relocated area, individuals and organisations attended the exhibitions.

#### AUNG MIN THAR COMMUNITY EXHIBITION

During September 2-4, 2016, the first community exhibition was held at the nursery school of the new village Aung Min Thar. 52 paintings were framed with card paper and displayed. Because the exhibition space is in the community and very easily accessible, many children, school teachers and village-

ers came to the exhibition. People were surprised to see how beautiful the children's paintings were. The exhibition was like a festival for the children. Some children came to the exhibition more than once in a single day. They started to believe that they could do something for their community and changes could really happen because of them.

#### EXTENDED EXHIBITIONS IN YANGON

During October 8-9, 2016, Airavati was invited to display the children's paintings at The Future Aye-yarwady River of Myanmar meeting in Yangon City, organized by photo journalist Myint Maung Kyaw, researcher and writer Myint Zaw, and Cartoonists Myint Moe Aung and Phe Soe Aung. The event which highlighted environmental and resource issues in Myanmar, was attended by scholars, researchers, civil society organisations, writers and artists. 31 paintings from the relocated children of Myitsone

NO.	EXHIBITION	DATE	PLACE	NO. OF DISPLAYED PAINTINGS
1	Community-level exhibition	2-4, September, 2016	Mazup Nursery school, Aung Min Thar Village	52
2	Extended Exhibition	8-9, October, 2016	Yangon Gallery, Yangon	31
3	Extended Exhibition	23-30, October, 2016	National Museum, Yangon	31
4	Community-level exhibition	22-23, December, 2016	Primary school, Mali Yang Village	40
5	Culminating exhibition	11-13, January, 2017	YMCA, Myitkyina City	39
			<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>193</b>

Table 6—Exhibitions from September 2016 to January 2017



were framed and exhibited. During October 23-30, these 31 paintings were exhibited again at the Yangon Museum. These two extended exhibitions highlighted the impact of the art programme in expressing the feelings and experiences of the relocated Myitsonne villagers and relaying them to the outside world.

**MALI YANG COMMUNITY EXHIBITION**

During December 22-23, 2016, the second community exhibition was held in the primary school of the relocated village Mali Yang. 40 paintings were framed with card paper and displayed. Mali Yang Village is located on the other side of the river. To get to the other villages and Myitkyina City, the villagers have to cross the river by boat. Therefore, the project team decided to hold the second community exhibition in this village so that villagers and children from this village could easily visit it. Like the first community exhibition, many children, school teachers and villagers came to the exhibition. Because all the topics of the paintings came from the interviews on the villagers, the villagers were really happy and encouraged to see how the stories they narrated had been turned into paintings by the children and how powerful the paintings were. Both the villagers and the children started to trust the art project more.



**3.2.6 Video Documentation**

In January, 2017, a 13-minute culminating documentary film with English subtitles was produced for the art programme. This film has been uploaded on the Airavati website and shared with donors and partner organizations. The film will also be shown in the relocated villages. The project team will look for opportunities to submit the film to film festivals and screening events so as to further expand the programme’s vision and impact.

**3.2.7 Capacity Building of Art Teachers**

A programme component is to recruit and train two art teachers who will lead the children’s art activities and further sustain the art programme. However, it is difficult to find appropriate personnel, since art as the main method and focus of activities is still rare in Myanmar. Most people working in civil society organizations do not have an art background, and most artists are not usually involved in civil society projects.

**CULMINATING EXHIBITION IN MYITKYINA CITY**

During January 11-13, 2017, the culminating exhibition was finally held in the YMCA Hall of Myitkyina City. 31 paintings were framed with wood and 8 enlarged and printed out. The original plan was to hold one more exhibition in the village. But in order to reach more people from outside, the project team decided to hold it in Myitkyina City. 31 child artists and 6 school teachers were invited to the opening ceremony. Individuals, organisations and media outlets came to the exhibition. Some villagers from the relocated villages came to the exhibition on motor-bikes. The children and villagers were encouraged at seeing how people from outside appreciate and care about the exhibition and the stories behind it.

Another important outcome of the exhibition was that media outlets like Kachin Wave, Myitkyina Journal, MRTV, etc., which visited the exhibition, helped pass the message of the paintings and exhibitions to a wider audience.

It has been over 6 years since the forced relocation took place. However, these five exhibitions were the first art exhibitions of the displaced children. A total of 193 paintings were displayed at the five exhibitions, for the first time, bringing the voice and concerns of the displaced children and adults to the outside public.

Recommended by the art project team of Airavati in Laiza, Kachin State, Airavati recruited an art teacher, Ms Ja Bran, from Myitkyina. The art teacher received a one month training at Laiza, and with the support of the Laiza art project team, she successfully started the project at Myitsonne. The position for the second art teacher was filled when Mr. Seng Naw was recruited in July, 2016. From July to December, 2016, the two art teachers continued to be trained by the Laiza art project team and gradually learned to lead art activities at the relocated schools.

The two art teachers fully understand the goal, objectives, principles and ways of working on the art programme, and have developed a close relationship with the participant schools and children. The recruitment and empowerment of the two art teachers was an important achievement of the project.

SN	EMPLOYEE	POSITION	QUALIFICATION	EMPLOYMENT STATUS
1	Ja Bran	Art Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ ECCD teacher</li> <li>■ ECCD teachers’ trainer</li> <li>■ good communication skills</li> </ul>	Full time
2	Seng Naw	Art Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Training and practice in computer design and Photoshop.</li> <li>■ Drawing, computer design, camera and video skills.</li> </ul>	Full time

Table 7 – Project Art Teachers

### 3.2.8 Other Activities

#### SUMMER CAMP ART COURSES

In addition to the regular art classes, the project team also supported the request of the Mazup Primary School in Aung Min Thar Village to conduct art activities during the summer camp in April, 2016. A total of 90 children participated in four days of summer camp activities. The summer camp art courses helped to build up communication and trust between the project team and the participant communities which have been very supportive of the art programme.

#### PUBLICATION

As stated previously, Airavati was invited to exhibit the paintings from the relocated children at The Future Ayeyarwady River of Myanmar meeting in Yangon. After the meeting, the organizers published a book on the outcomes of the meeting. The introduction on the art programme and photos of some paintings were included in the book which further spread the impact of the art programme.

### 3.3 Summary of Achievements

During the project year January 01, 2016 to January 31, 2017, Airavati has completed implementing the “Expression and Voices of Displaced Children from the Confluence Region” programme. The activities were recorded through art work, data, diaries, reports, photos and videos. The accomplished goals are summarized in table 8 below.

ACTIVITIES	THE EXPECTED OUTCOMES	THE ACHIEVED OUTCOMES
Baseline Interviews with the Relocated Families and Villages		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 group interviews were accomplished</li> <li>60 villagers were interviewed</li> <li>Over 20 stories about the relocation were collected</li> </ul>
Art Activity Design and Participant Children Identifying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop the curriculum of 6 topics for art activities</li> <li>Identify 200 participant children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The curriculum of 5 topics was developed for the children’s art activities. The number of topics was based on the practical situation of the project area.</li> <li>210 participant children were identified as participant children</li> </ul>
Children’s Art Activities and Work Produced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>800 paintings</li> <li>2000 photos</li> <li>20 sculptures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over 1,200 paintings</li> <li>Over 3,000 photos taken for the art project</li> <li>The plan for the sculpture course was replaced by more painting courses.</li> </ul>
School Teachers’ Trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6 intensive trainings for the school teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 intensive trainings were provided</li> <li>5 courses were given to the trained teachers</li> </ul>
Art Exhibitions and Public Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 community-level exhibitions</li> <li>1 culminating exhibition in Myitkyina City</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 community-level exhibitions</li> <li>2 extended exhibitions in Yangon</li> <li>1 culminating exhibition in Myitkyina City</li> </ul>
Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two 4-minute video clips</li> <li>One 5-minute culminating video.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One 13-minute culminating film</li> </ul>
Capacity Building of Art Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit and train 2 art teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 art teachers were recruited and trained</li> </ul>
Disseminating the project outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Besides the exhibitions of the original works, digital copies of the paintings will be distributed widely for other possible exhibitions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 extended exhibitions were conducted in Yangon</li> </ul>
Assessment and Future Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying further areas of need for the target population.</li> <li>Identifying potential partners and fundraising for the next year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>T-shirts printed with the exhibition name were produced at the culminating exhibition in Myitkyina.</li> <li>Individual audience, organisations and media agencies such as MRTV, Kachin Waves and Kachin Land visited and commented the exhibitions. The media agencies reported the culminating exhibition.</li> <li>Children, school teachers and the relocated communities are all expecting to continue the art programme.</li> </ul>

Table 8 – Achievements from January 01, 2016 to January 31, 2017

## IV. Evaluation

### 4.1 Comments on the Art Project from the Participant Communities

Since the beginning of the art programme in January, 2016, the participant communities have witnessed the implementation process, the efforts and the achievements of the programme. The villagers and school teachers have started to communicate more with the project team and given their comments on the art project. The comments from villagers and visitors to the two community-level exhibitions and the culminating exhibition in Myitkyina City have been collected as below.

#### COMMUNITY EXHIBITION IN AUNG MIN THAR VILLAGE 2-4, SEPTEMBER, 2016

“This exhibition is very good and it makes the children happy.”  
— Zar She Tun

“Very good. The children were pleased with their paintings. The paintings made me feel happy about the beautiful environment. I wish that more children could participate in the art activities and that the art activities would be able to continue.”  
— Hkawng Naw

“The exhibition was very encouraging to the children. I am a school teacher. I did not have good taste in Art. But my participation in art activities convinced me that painting is a kind of work that makes something known without saying a word. On the other hand, I found that the children who did not have a chance to participate in the art activities were unhappy and that the children whose paintings were not included in the exhibitions were unhappy. It would be even better if more students could participate in the art activities.”  
— Thi Da Aung

“I was satisfied with the children’s paintings. The paintings caused me to remember my old village.”  
— Shingrai Ja Mai

“I was deeply moved by the paintings. I am really grateful to all of you for these activities that we parents are not able to do.”  
— Yun Mai

#### COMMUNITY EXHIBITION IN MALI YANG VILLAGE 22-23, DECEMBER, 2016

“I was very happy to see the children’s arts.”  
— Hkawn H pang

“I was pleased with the quality of children’s art works. I hope that they will become future respected leaders.”  
— Roi Ja

“Very happy to see the paintings as they are so interesting. It is worth seeing them.”  
— Lu Lu Awng, Lu Nan, Ban Htoi

#### CULMINATING EXHIBITION IN YMCA, MYITKYINA CITY 11-13, JANUARY, 2017

“The paintings are very good. So proud of the children. Wish that their work will be more successful. So appreciative. That was perfect and exciting. It would have been even better if the exhibition could explain more about the art work. Expression of children’s feelings through the arts is really needed and should be further encouraged.”  
— Mary Kaw Lum, Kai Htang, Zau Myu Aung, La Sang Ja Tawng Naw, Mary Seng Mun, Hkawng Gan, Bawm Wang, Roi Nau, Nu Pan

## 4.2 Self-evaluation of the Project Team

The art programme has successfully achieved its goal and objectives and expected outcomes. The planned art activities were completed and the art works collected. The school teachers were trained. Two strong art teachers have been recruited and trained. The schools and villagers were motivated. Exhibitions were held. The entire art programme has been recorded into a documentary film.

Although it was a new method and a new type of work, the art project has obtained recognition, support and trust from the relocated children and their parents, the school teachers and community leaders. Children and youth have had opportunities to do art work and discover their talent. Some of them have the potential to become professional artists. Most importantly, children have learned the methods and gained the ability to express their feelings and concerns about their experiences and life through making art creations. Children felt happy to participate in art activities and they are satisfied with and proud of their own art work.

Apart from the children, parents also had the chance to participate in the art activities as interviewees. All the topics for the art activities came from interviews with the parents. The topics range from detailed memories of the old villages to the relocation process, and the difficulties and needs they face. Through these artistic activities, children whose peaceful lives have been shattered by relocation have the opportunity to prove that they have the ability to be inventive and to express their con-

cerns and views about nature and the environment and to creatively express their worries and trauma through the arts. The worries and sorrows of the parents were also expressed through the children's paintings. Therefore, the art project provides an in-depth healing process for the displaced children and youth, their parents and the wider relocated communities in the Confluence Region.

Furthermore, the issue of Myitsone is a lesson for all societies. Art can bring together people from different backgrounds for a communal exchange in the public domain and thus help create a harmonious atmosphere between human society and nature, and among various ethnicities. By ultimately showing the children's work at the exhibitions, the project highlighted the children's personal and community narratives and their hopes and rights for peaceful and stable development.

The art programme has shown its effectiveness and relevance in the target area and in the wider general public. The children, the adult villagers and the schools are all willing to further promote the art programme in the Confluence Region. Therefore, it is important to continue the art programme.

## 4.3 Challenges

Challenges in the children's art programme include:

- The Myitsone Dam remains a sensitive issue in Myanmar. Currently, only a few organisations are implementing projects in the Confluence Region. Airavati is one of them. When promoting and advocating the art programme, the team needs to

be cautious, and sensitive when promoting the necessity and importance of the art programme.

- The art activities' schedule often needed to be postponed because of holidays and other school activities. More teachers have been expected to participate in the teachers' training sessions.
- Assessment of the project needs to be promoted. In-depth interviews and case story collection are needed to further spread the impact and effectiveness of the project.
- It is hard to recruit appropriate persons for the needed positions. The current art teachers should be retained. Meanwhile, to further promote the project, more human resources are needed, including a competent art director.
- In future, the focus of the project has to change from direct implementation of art activities to more capacity building and empowerment of local school teachers from the relocated area so that the teachers and schools will act as the main promoters and implementers. Airavati will provide essential and necessary capacity building training, including a manual and guide book, needed materials and relevant monitoring and assistance for the target schools in the new project period.
- Furthermore, an artist network needs to be built up in this area so that volunteer artists will be invited to the project area each year and support the art activities regularly. This is essential for the sustainability of the art project.

## 4.4 The Expected Work and Sustainability

### 4.4.1 The Expected Work

There are a total of 6 relocated schools at Myitsone and approximately 900 students. Currently, the art project is conducting intervention art activities with 210 participant children. However, many of the other children who would like to participate could not be included in the project yet. Therefore, some local school teachers were trained to work with children on artistic methods. For 2017-2018, based on the experience and the outcomes gained from current art activities, Airavati looks forward to continuing the art project in the relocated area, and to bring the art activities to more displaced children in the Confluence Region through training of school teachers and art materials distribution.

The primary activities of the Myitsone Art Project in the new period will include:

- Conduct story-telling interviews with the relocated villagers
- Build up an artists' network which will bring at least 5 local and international artists/activists every year to the participant area and implement art activities with the displaced children so as to realize the sustainability of the project's art initiative.
- Procure and transport necessary art materials to the target schools.
- Provide trainings for local school teachers from the relocated area.

- Develop and publish a guide book for teachers of the target schools.
- Regularly visit the target schools and monitor the art activities.
- Show more art work at community-level exhibitions and in the cities.
- Raise exposure by filming the process and posting videos on the internet, as well as disseminating them through various networks. Catalogues of the works exhibited will also be made and widely disseminated.

### 4.4.2 Sustainability

#### NUMBER AND QUALIFICATION OF THE PERSONNEL

The project successfully sponsored two art teachers who are capable, experienced and committed to the project. This is a really important achievement as it is crucial to the sustainability of the project.

#### MOTIVATION AND WILLING OF THE TARGET COMMUNITIES

The art program successfully built up understanding, trust, motivation and a willingness to continue with the project by the target communities. The children, the parents and the school teachers all strongly support the art programme, and want to continue and expand in the future. This is another important achievement, crucial to the sustainability of the project.

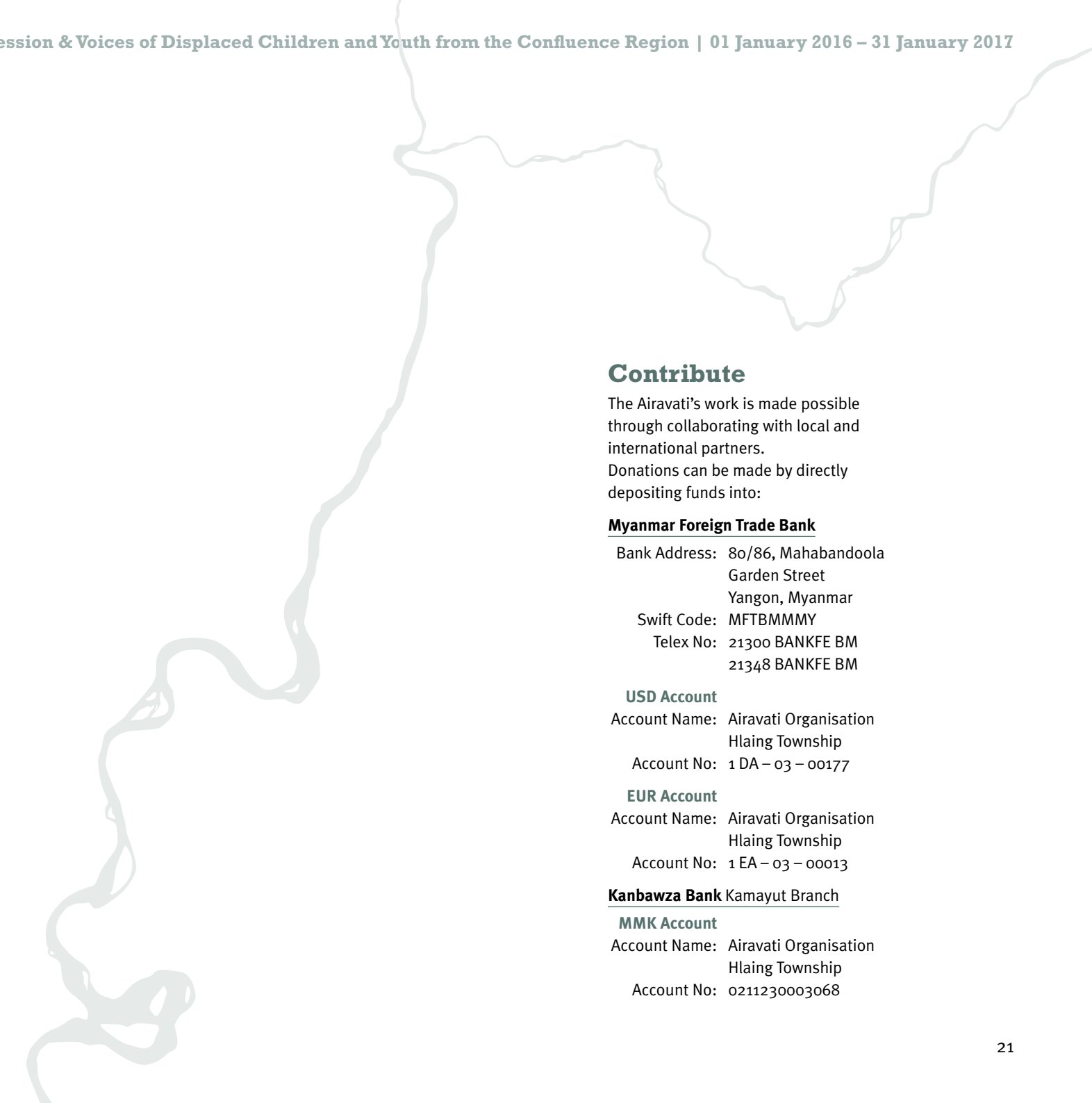
#### COOPERATING WITH OTHER ACTORS

With the impact of the art programme, Airavati has the potential to cooperate with individual artists, art agencies, photographers, civil society organisations and media groups to further implement the programme in the Confluence Region and raise more public awareness nationally and internationally of the difficulties and needs of the target population and communities.

#### EFFECTIVENESS

The programme and exhibitions show the effectiveness and power of the arts. The programme is valuable and welcomed. It needs to be continued, in order to realize its own sustainability and contribute to the development of displaced people in the Confluence Region.

## V. Location Map Confluence



### Contribute

The Airavati's work is made possible through collaborating with local and international partners.

Donations can be made by directly depositing funds into:

#### Myanmar Foreign Trade Bank

Bank Address: 80/86, Mahabandoola  
Garden Street  
Yangon, Myanmar  
Swift Code: MFTBMMMY  
Telex No: 21300 BANKFE BM  
21348 BANKFE BM

#### USD Account

Account Name: Airavati Organisation  
Hlaing Township  
Account No: 1 DA - 03 - 00177

#### EUR Account

Account Name: Airavati Organisation  
Hlaing Township  
Account No: 1 EA - 03 - 00013

#### Kanbawza Bank Kamayut Branch

#### MMK Account

Account Name: Airavati Organisation  
Hlaing Township  
Account No: 0211230003068