



# Burma Children

*Medical Fund* operating to give  
Burma's kids a future

## Training of Trainers: Female and Male Reproductive Health and Rights Project Report

6-8 June 2018

*Ler Per Her, Hlaingbwe Township, Karen State, Burma*



Union Aid Abroad APHEDA  
The global justice organisation of the Australian union movement





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## Project Executive Summary

PROJECT TITLE:	Training of Trainers: Female and Male Reproductive Health and Rights
PROJECT LOCATION:	Ler Per Her Clinic, Ler Per Her, Hlaingbwe Township, Karen State, Burma
DURATION:	6-8 June 2018
BENEFICIARIES:	<b>Primary beneficiaries: (8) village health workers and (6) teachers</b> from six villages in Ler Per Her, Hlaingbwe Township, Karen State, Burma <b>Secondary beneficiaries:</b> Approximately <b>1,864 villagers</b> in the Ler Per Her area
KEY PARTNERS:	<b>Red Rocketship, Days For Girls, Union Aid Abroad APHEDA,</b>
KEY OBJECTIVES:	Train local community leaders in Ler Per Her to hold future training sessions on male and female reproductive health and rights, including the topic of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Reproductive systems and health rights</li><li>2) Sanitary practices during the menstrual cycle</li><li>3) Key safe contraceptive methods:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) Male and female condoms</li><li>(b) Combined Oral Contraceptive Pills (COC Pills)</li><li>(c) Intrauterine Devices (IUDs)</li><li>(d) Contraceptive injection</li></ul></li></ul>
KEY INPUTS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Elicited information about the reproductive system and health rights from <b>a manual published by Days For Girls</b> and several credible web resources to provide a high-quality training that is relevant to the target population.</li><li>2. Utilized various <b>visual aids</b>, such as <b>flip boards, YouTube video clips, and sanitary kits</b>, to facilitate the understanding about reproductive systems and its functions in addition to introducing various methods of safe contraception.</li></ul>
EXPECTED HEALTH OUTCOMES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Increased awareness about <b>safe sexual practices</b></li><li>2. Increased awareness about <b>contraceptive options</b></li><li>3. knowledge about <b>appropriate sanitary and hygiene practices</b> while menstruating</li><li>4. <b>Trainees will hold their own training sessions in their communities with villages to share</b> the information they have learned from the training and thus promote good reproductive health.</li></ul>



## Project Overview

### 1. Background Information

The European Union projected that the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) between the Burma government and 9 of the 13 representatives of diverse ethnic groups in Burma can beget positive political, economic, and social changes in the Burma society.<sup>1</sup> The majority of ethnic minority population in remote areas of Burma, however, still faces barriers to accessing basic healthcare services.<sup>2</sup> Adding to this, education and general knowledge about reproductive health remains very limited. Many women and girls also lack knowledge about menstruation and hygienic menstrual practices.<sup>3</sup> Although, sexual and reproductive education technically exists in state run schools' curriculum, a combination of teachers' ignorance, embarrassment surrounding the topic and a general belief that knowledge about reproductive health will encourage children to become sexually active means that little is actually taught.<sup>4</sup> For women and girls who live in the remote areas managing their monthly periods can be very challenging because of a lack of readily available and affordable feminine hygiene products. Consequently, unplanned pregnancies, missed classes during menstruation and exposure to infection from unhygienic practices are not uncommon.<sup>5</sup>



Figure 1. : Map of Ler Per Her

Retrieved the image from the Free Ranger  
Burma website

Boys and men also suffer from a lack of education about reproductive health.<sup>6</sup> Penile enhancement injections through unsafe and unhygienic materials and practices can lead to serious infections that can become life threatening if left untreated.<sup>7</sup> By providing and creating

<sup>1</sup> Institute for Security & Development Policy. "Myanmar's Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement." *Institute for Security & Development Policy*, Oct. 2015, pp. 1–9., [isdp.eu/publication/myanmars-nationwide-ceasefire-agreement/](http://isdp.eu/publication/myanmars-nationwide-ceasefire-agreement/).

<sup>2</sup> The World Health Organization. "Myanmar." *The World Health Organization* 30 June 2018, [www.who.int/countries/mmr/en/](http://www.who.int/countries/mmr/en/).

<sup>3</sup> Burnet Institute (2018). [https://www.burnet.edu.au/news/917\\_landmark\\_study\\_into\\_adolescent\\_health\\_in\\_myanmar](https://www.burnet.edu.au/news/917_landmark_study_into_adolescent_health_in_myanmar) 2 Sommer, M. (2017). <https://theconversation.com/why-a-monthly-period-is-especially-hard-for-millions-of-women-and-girls-around-the-world-78235>

<sup>4</sup> Hogan, Libby. "Sex, Taboos and #MeToo - in the Country with No Word for 'Vagina.'" *The Guardian*, 12 July 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jul/12/why-are-we-afraid-to-say-vagina-myanmar-learns-to-talk-about-sex>

<sup>5</sup> Svensøy, Johannes Nordsteien, et al. "Complications of Penile Self-Injections: Investigation of 680 Patients with Complications Following Penile Self-Injections with Mineral Oil." *World Journal of Urology*, vol. 36, no. 1, 28 Oct. 2017, pp. 135–143., doi:10.1007/s00345-017-2110-9.

<sup>6</sup> Stutchbury, J., & Player, E. (2013). Karen Viagra: Burma's best kept secret. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3722817/>

<sup>7</sup> Svensøy, Johannes Nordsteien, et al. "Complications of Penile Self-Injections: Investigation of 680 Patients with Complications Following Penile Self-Injections with Mineral Oil." *World Journal of Urology*, vol. 36, no. 1, 28 Oct. 2017, pp. 135–143., doi:10.1007/s00345-017-2110-9.





access to reproductive health education as well as knowledge about hygienic menstrual health for girls and women, Burma Children Medical Fund (BCMF) aims to fill a much needed gap in Burma.

## 2. Introduction



Figure 2 :Ler Per Her Village

Ler Per Her is an area encompassing 14 villages in Karen State, Burma. Located close to the border of Burma and Thailand, the villages are surrounded by hills and jungle, and are only accessible through unpaved roads. In the rainy season between July and September, the villages become especially difficult to access. Remotely located with only 4- village clinics serving the whole area, villagers must travel to Thailand to access the nearest stores and



Figure 3: On the way to Ler Per Her

hospitals, an approximate 4 to 5 hours walk. BCMF has a longstanding relationship with Ler Per Her, assisting villagers in the area with various ongoing projects such as reproductive health and right training for women and girls. Due to difficulty accessing pads and a lack of knowledge surrounding hygienic menstrual health, women and girls often have to resort to creative ways to manage their menstruation.

During BCMF's first reproductive health and rights workshop in March 2018, BCMF learned that girls and women use their longyi during menstruation due to difficulties in purchasing pads. For example, when they need to buy pads, they have to walk two to three hours to the nearest shop in Thailand. And even if pads are available, not all women and girls can afford them or can dispose of them properly.

Upon the completion of BCMF's first puberty and menstrual health workshop in March 2018, BCMF successfully completed **a training of trainers (TOT) on female and male reproductive health and rights** between **June 6-8 -2018**. Although the training was held at the beginning of the rainy season, **4 male** and **10 female** village health workers and teachers from **6 villages** came to the Ler Per Her Clinic to participate in the training. Each participant of the



workshop was selected with the help of Saw Eh Nge, the head medic of Ler Per her Clinic due to their position in their communities as teachers and village health workers. This will allow them to be more effective at holding workshops on reproductive health and rights in their schools and villages. The TOT will allow not only more villagers to gain knowledge about reproductive health and rights but increase the capacity of the health workers and teachers running future training sessions while promoting good reproductive health.

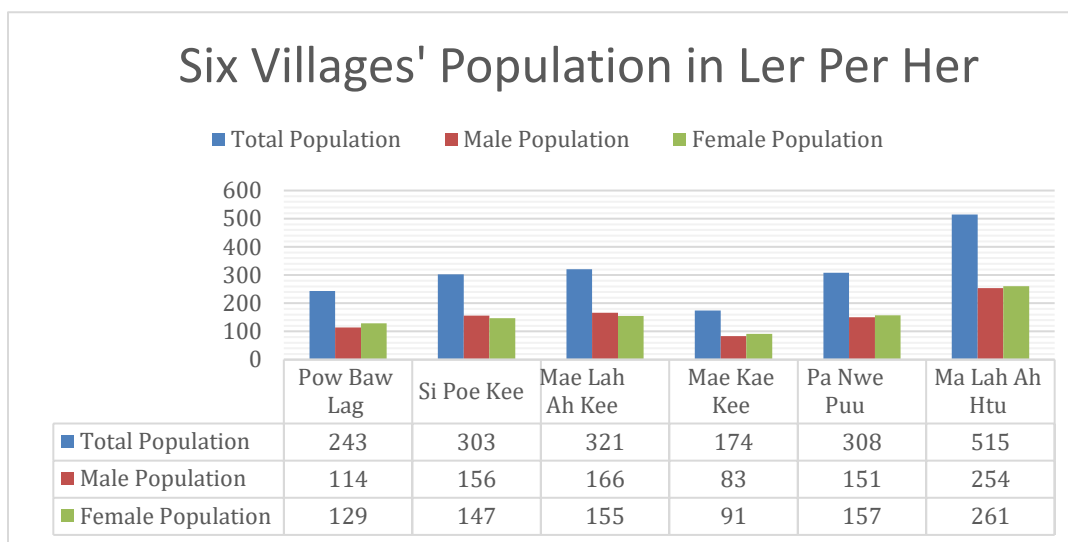


Figure 4. <Six Villages' Population in Ler Per Her> provided by Saw Eh Nge, Ler Per Her Head Medic



### 3. Project Schedule

#### <Day 1> 6-June-2018

Time	Topic	Activity
09:00-12:00	Introduction to Reproductive Health and Rights, Reproductive Anatomy, and Puberty	Discussion and lecture sessions
12:00-12:30	Menstrual Cycle and Premenstrual Syndrome	Menstrual cycle phases matching game
12:30-13:00	Pads (disposable and reusable) and Procurement Protocol	Reusable sanitary pad demonstration
14:20-16:00	Sexual Reproduction and Healthy Pregnancy Practices	Video

On the first day of the TOT, BCMF team members covered the topics of reproductive anatomy, puberty and the menstrual cycle, as well as sexual reproduction, pregnancy and how to use reusable pads. In general, the training was very interesting and the participants were excited to learn because this was the first time they have even learned about these. All topics were new for the participants and many reported never having learned anything about reproductive health and rights in the past. When BCMF talked about pads, most of the participants reported that they had never used pads before. Some of the female participants only use their longyi<sup>8</sup> by constantly rotating and readjusting the longyi's position. Because many of the participants had never used pads, when BCMF distributed a Days for Girl's reusable sanitary pad kit to each of the participants, trainers also explained how to use the pads.



Figure 5: Section on Get to know your body

<sup>8</sup> A longyi is a tube-shaped skirt that is worn wrapped around the body


**<Day 2> 7-June-2018**

Time	Topic	Activity
9:00-11:00	Family Planning	Role play
11:00-12:00	Pelvic floor problems, Menopause	Strengthening exercises and coping mechanisms
13:30-15:00	Sexually Transmitted Infections and HIV, Penis Injection	Participant presentations, Lecture
15:00-15:30	Hygiene	Handwashing demo and game
15:30-16:00	Scope of training, M&E protocol, Referral plan	Role Play; HW assignment: create a village-specific; Referral plan

During the second day of the training, BCMF started the day by covering the topic of family planning through a lecture and a role play exercise. With most of the participants married this topic was very interesting, and most of participants asked many question. BCMF team members also covered the topic of penile enhancement injections. Although participants have heard about this practice before, they did not know about its adverse health effects. Then, a hand-washing exercise was used to teach participants about general hygiene and proper hand-washing techniques.



*Figure 6: BCMF team members and participants demonstrating proper hand- washing during the training*



*Figure 7: BCMF team members during the training*





## &lt;Day 3&gt; 8-June-2018

Time	Topic	Activity
8:00-11:00	Assessment	Individual Presentation
11:00-12:00	Feedback on Assessment	Individual Feedback Session
13:30-14:00	Awarding Certificates	Certificate Award Ceremony

The third day, BCMF held an assessment of the trainees by having all the participants hold a short presentation alone about what they had learned during the last two days. Participants then received feedback on their presentation. Finally, BCMF provided each participant with a certificate at the end of the workshop as well as materials to hold their own training session in their villages.

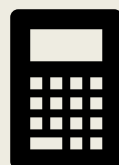
## &lt;One-Way Travel Time from Mae Sot to Ler Per Her Clinic&gt;



2 Hours



5 Minutes



Total: 2 hours and 5 minutes



## 4. Deliverables from BCMF and Its Partner Organizations



Each Feminine hygiene kit includes 1 hand soap, 1 Ziploc bag (to wash dirty pads), 2 pairs of underwear, 1 hand towel, 2 leak proof pads (snaps onto underwear), 8 liners for the pads, 1 drawstring carrier bag for hygiene kits, and an instruction sheet for the hygiene kit. Each trainee received one feminine hygiene kit.

The Burma Children Medical Fund (BCMF) distributed the following items to the 14 trainees to help them hold future training sessions in their villages: 14 feminine hygiene kits, 60 pairs of gloves, 60 male condoms, 6 flip charts, 6 bottles of coloured paint, 12 colour and marker pens, and 60 attendance sheets.

Each village received 1 flip chart, 10 attendance sheets and 10 condoms. Reproductive health flip charts will be used as training by health workers and teachers to hold workshop with students and villagers. Attendance sheets will be used to keep track of the number of villagers who received training by the trainees, the condoms will be used during training sessions to demonstrate how to correctly use a male condom.



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***“The concepts of Reproductive health and rights were unheard of in Ler Per Her in the past. Before the training, health care workers in Ler Per Her had some medical knowledge only about malaria and tuberculosis. Now, these health care workers who received training can deliver information from the training to their villagers. Nearly 2,000 people can benefit from the training provided by BCMF. We greatly appreciate BCMF for providing the training on reproductive health and rights. Thank you very much, and you are always welcomed in Ler Per Her”***

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Figure 8: Saw Eh Nge, Ler Per Her  
Head Medic



### ***Voices of Our Trainees after the Training***

***“Diverse learning activities and graphic visual aids during the training session were especially useful for me to have a better understanding female and male reproductive anatomy. I will share the information provided by BCMF with my children and the whole village community. When I go back to my village, I will provide training to two groups in my village: one with children who attend the school and the other with parents and children who do not or did not attend school. I hope BCMF visits Ler Per Her again after the rainy season to provide a training on the same topic. I will invite my friends, who are interested in this topic, to join the training session. I want to thank BCMF and its staff members who prepared the training and came to teach us.”***

***“This training is very meaningful to our community because we did not have any knowledge about female and male reproductive health and rights. And because of the lack of knowledge about it, many people were getting married early and having children without any thorough family planning. So, this training is very important for our village community. From this training, I learned a lot about the female body’s physiological changes during menstruation. I plan to call all the villages and hold for them one-day training on this topic in one day. I really want to thank BCMF staff members who spared their time to come here and provide us the training.”***

***“I have never had training on this topic, and it was really an eye-opening experience for me. I got to learn more about pregnancy, sexuality, and the human reproductive systems. It was interesting for me that pregnant women should consume more vitamin A and thalidomide. BCMF staff came a long way to provide training to us, and I appreciate your efforts to come here.”***



## 5. Key Observations and Lessons Learned from the Project

a. Male trainees in Ler Per Her area are interested in learning and promulgating information about male and female reproductive health and rights to their communities. In the Ler Per Her area, BCMF should continue to work with both male and female trainees to encourage the destigmatization of this topic as well as encourage knowledge sharing among both men and women.

b. After the TOT, the trainees provided BCMF with suggestions on future workshops. They mentioned that more visual aids such as pictures and videos would help them understand topic better. They also mentioned that longer training sessions covering more topics would help them receive in-depth knowledge male and female reproductive health and rights.

## 6. Future Direction

**Improvement**



**Sustainability**

**Burma Children Medical Fund (BCMF)** is committed to **improving** its male and female reproductive health and rights outreach project making the project **sustainable**, and is planning to **expand** it in the next five years, with support from donors and partner organisations. BCMF will make return to the Ler Per Her area to follow-up with trainees, at the end of September, to ensure the trainees are accurately delivering the information they received from BCMF.

Figure 9: On the Way to Ler Per Her





Future training should be held in the dry season, so that villagers can come to the Ler Per Her Clinic, with less difficulty

## Improvement

More vivid visual aids and detailed information are needed to further improve the quality of the training and thus to meet the needs of trainees

BCMF plans to enhance the capability of officers who are in charge of the project by improving their teaching and presentation skills in order to make the training session more interesting and dynamic

## Sustainability

BCMF will return to the Ler Per Her area to check up with trainees and ensure the trainees are accurately delivering training to villagers

### <BCMF Future Agenda for Reproductive Health and Rights Project>

*With future efforts to make **Improvement**, **Sustainability**, and **Expansion** for The Reproductive Health and Rights Project, BCMF projects that it can improve the knowledge of reproductive health and rights and make positive health impacts on a total of 3,864 villagers in Ler Per Her areas.*



Figure 10: BCMF team members and participants after the trainees received the certificates



## Concluding Remarks

Burma has made some improvements concerning healthcare in recent years; however, rural areas continue to be neglected. With education concerning male and female reproductive health and rights all but non-existent, family planning, feminine hygiene pads to manage menstruation and basic knowledge about the reproductive system continues to be out of reach for large portions of the population in Burma. Community based organisations such as BCMF have stepped into fill this gap, in an effort to improve people's overall reproductive health. BCMF believes that everyone has the right to access quality health-care, and providing workshops on male and female reproductive health and rights will promote good reproductive health.

## Acknowledgement

**BCMF** would like to thank our donors and partners, **Red Rocketship, Days For Girls, and Union Aid Abroad APHEDA**. Without their support, BCMF would not have been able to successfully deliver TOT in Ler Per Her.



## <Reproductive Health and Rights Project BCMF Team>



**Figure 11: The Ler Per Her Team**

**Kanchana Thronton, *BCMF Director*:**  
Program Supervisor

**Aung Tin Tun, *BCMF Project Officer*:** Presenter

**Than Than Oo, *BCMF Project Officer*:** Presenter, Budgeting Manager

**Phoebe Bredin, *BCMF Volunteer*:** Program Coordinator

**Day Wah, *BCMF Intern*:** Presenter, Material Coordinator

**Cherry Paw, *BCMF Intern*:** Report Co-Editor, Interviewer, Interpreter

Contact T: +66 898 988 694 | W: [www.burmachildren.com](http://www.burmachildren.com)

Burma Children Medical Fund, P.O Box 109

Mae Sot, Tak 63110, Thailand