



Myanmar

Child-led Research

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A Beautiful Milestone: *A Step Towards a Better Future*



Myanmar Child Led Research Report



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our research is entitled “A Beautiful Milestone: A Step Towards a Better Future” because this is the first research report that we have done as young researchers. This is also the first child-led research supervised by World Vision Myanmar and is therefore a milestone that is worth celebrating.

Completing this research report would not have been possible without the continuous support and guidance of World Vision East Asia and World Vision International Myanmar. They played significant roles in ensuring the completion of this research study.

First of all, we would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the staff at World Vision East Asia, including Darrel Flores, Faith Richelle Bullecer-Sy, and Ariel Odtojan, for their exceptional guidance and assistance throughout the child-led research process. In addition, we would like to thank the senior leadership team members at World Vision Myanmar (WVM), the WVM staff from Mawlamyine Area Program (AP), Yenanchuang AP, Seikphyu AP, Amarapura AP, youth members from Thuhtaygone Baptist church, Advocacy and Communications Division, Child Protection & Participation, and Design Monitoring & Evaluation (CPP & DME) Departments at WVM for their encouragement and support throughout this research journey.

We are also grateful to all the children, parents, and teachers, including community-based organization (CBO) members and leaders, for taking their time to participate in our data collection activities.

To conclude, we would also like to express our heartfelt gratitude to World Vision International for the Young Minds CAMP (Child-Led Actions, Mobilizations & Partnerships) platform and for empowering children like us to take the lead in this research initiative. We will continue to uphold YMC's tagline of nurturing hearts, inspiring minds, and growing impact in our own little ways.

CHILD AND ADULT SAFEGUARDING CONSIDERATIONS. World Vision Myanmar ensured the safe and ethical participation of girls, boys, men and women, adhering to World Vision's Safeguarding policy and protocols on data collection and World Vision's Code of Conduct. World Vision Myanmar support staff were trained on Psychological First Aid (PFA) and interviews' ethical and safe management. Names of participants have been anonymized to ensure confidentiality. All participants were oriented on the possibility of withdrawing from the interview process at any moment.

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Introduction

We are a group of eight researchers from Myanmar who conducted a study to get a better understanding of the impacts of climate change and disasters on children in our communities.

MEET OUR RESEARCH TEAM



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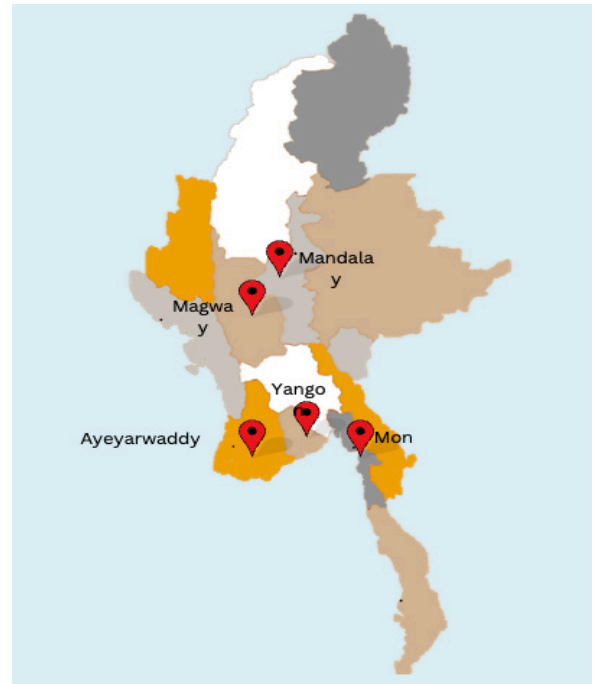


SHIN
Researcher



During the last decade, we have seen that children in our country have been significantly affected by extreme weather conditions and environmental problems. Our research showed that people’s irresponsible actions have been contributing to the worsening of climate change and the condition of our environment. As a result, people in Myanmar significantly suffer from problems such as extreme flooding and heat waves. Moreover, we observed that environmental issues such as garbage problems, air pollution, and water pollution have had a severe and devastating impact on the children in many rural areas.

Through our research project, we were able to interact with participants from the following townships: Amarapura, Yenanchaung, Myaungmya, Seikphyu, Yangon, and Mawlamyine. All townships except Yangon are rural. To some extent, we look at this as representing Ayeywarwaddy, Magway, Mandalay, Mon, and Yangon regions in Myanmar.



We conducted a survey among our fellow children so that they could have a chance to share their first-hand experiences and how they or their surroundings were impacted by climate change and disasters. We also had focus group discussions (FGDs) with community leaders so they could have a chance to explain from their perspectives how climate change and disasters impacted their communities over the years and so that they could give opinions on how they could further support children and their initiatives.

We were able to collect survey responses from a total of 81 children through Google Forms. Around 40 of our respondents were from Yangon and the rest are from the other townships. In terms of gender, 38.3% are male, 60.5% are female, and there was one who preferred not to reveal his/her gender.

We conducted FGDs with two groups of children aged 8-17 years. 16 of the participants from these two groups are males and 24 are females. We also conducted FGDs with groups of community leaders and adults. Three of the participants in these groups are males and 17 are females.

Township	Online Quantitative Survey	Focus Group Discussion		Total # Participants
	# Children Participants	# Children Participants	# Adult Participants	
Amarapura	0	31	0	31
Mawlamyaing	10	0	10	20
Myaungmya	10	0	0	10
Seikphyu	10	0	0	10
Yangon	41	9	0	50
Yenanchaung	10	0	11	21
Total	81	40	21	142



OBJECTIVES

- We chose to study the impact of climate change and disasters in our communities because we have seen how our communities suffer from the negative implications of climate change in our daily lives.
- We wanted to see how children and community leaders feel and what their ideas are on how the impact of climate change and disasters could be mitigated.

We specifically wanted to understand:

- The climate change and disasters children in our communities have personally experienced
- The impacts of climate change and disasters on different aspects of their lives.
- Their current knowledge of climate change and disasters
- Their preparedness for disasters
- Their sources of information and preferred information platforms.
- Community and child leaders' thoughts about children's contributions, ongoing or past campaigns, planned activities and what they think the support children need to get involved in initiatives.



Location of Surveys/KIIs/FGDs

We first created a survey questionnaire with a total of 12 questions using Google Forms. After creating the survey form, we sent the link to our classmates, schoolmates, friends, and children in our communities. It only took them 5-10 minutes to answer the survey. Meanwhile, it took a week before we reached 81 responses and we thereafter deactivated and closed our survey form.

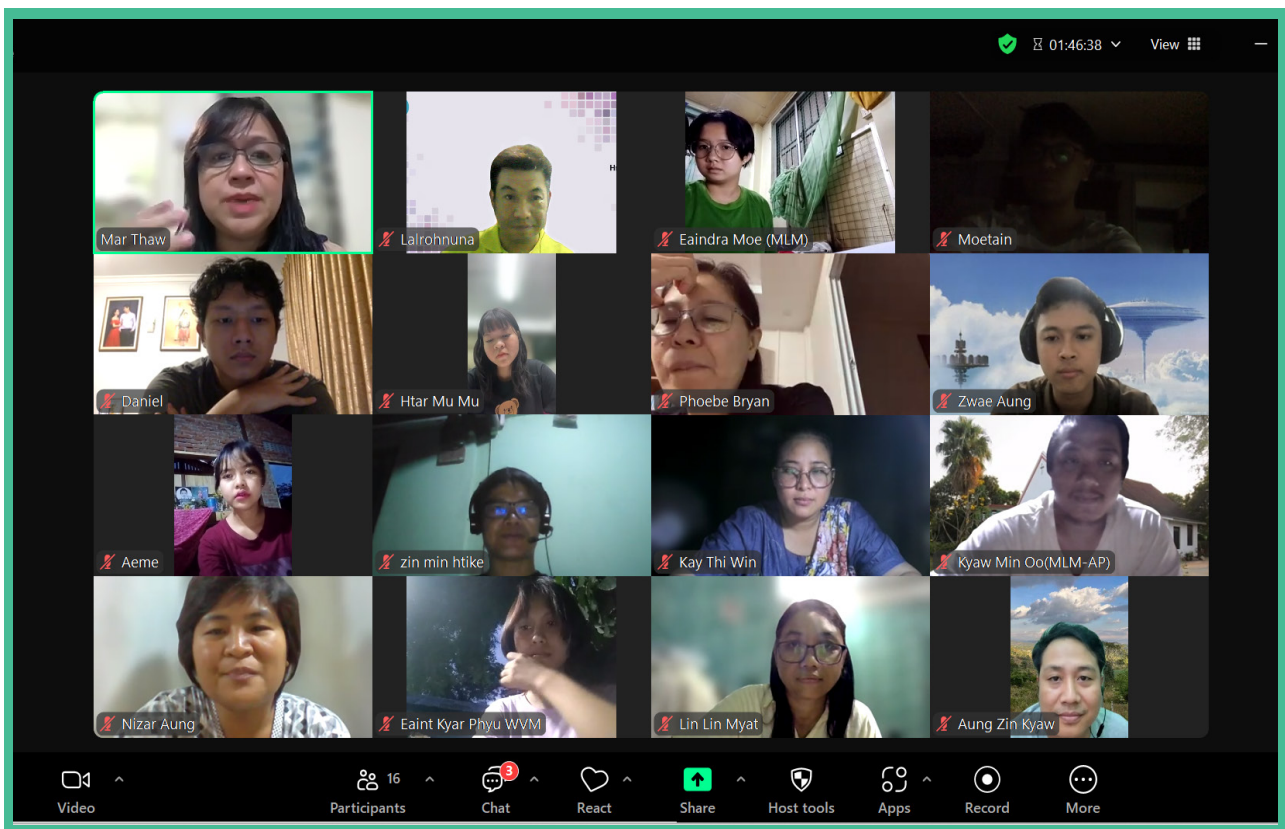
Our WV Myanmar adult mentors together with other AP staff supported us in organizing and inviting participants for the FGDs. We conducted the FGDs and interviews with participants in the community center. Each FGD and interview lasted for about 30-40 minutes and was conducted independently by us. For each FGD, we worked in pairs. One researcher is the interviewer and another is the note taker. When only one child researcher is available, WV staff supported the FGD through note-taking.

How we analyzed the data

For the quantitative survey, after we closed the survey form, we viewed the responses in the spreadsheet automatically generated by Google forms to make sense of the data we collected. As for the FGDs, we gathered the most dominant responses and compiled the quotes from the FGDs related to these dominant responses.

Our overall child-led research experience

Our experience doing the survey, FGDs, and interviews was very informative and we felt happy because our participants shared many important ideas. We plan to share our findings with other people, including the village government, the community, and the school.



Limitations

Limited internet connectivity and power disruptions are currently experienced in many regions in our country, and so we were able to send our Google survey form only to respondents who have existing and relatively stable internet connections. Most of these respondents are living in Yangon and a number of them come from the provinces of Mandalay Mon, Magway and Ayeyarwady. This therefore implies that our survey sample is not representative of the total population of children in our country, and that it only reflects the perspectives of a number of children in selected communities.

In line with the need to uphold voluntary participation, we also provided our survey respondents the freedom to answer only the questions in the form that they feel comfortable answering. There are therefore some questions in the form that respondents have intentionally left blank.

Overall, we believe that disclosing these limitations is important to uphold the integrity of our research. Furthermore, we are confident that despite these limitations, our findings provide a clear snapshot of the situation of children in our country amidst the worsening impacts of climate change and disasters. We hope that our findings will be helpful in better understanding children's experiences in our country, and also lead to the implementation of significant climate action and disaster risk reduction initiatives in our communities.



A. Climate Change & Disasters Experienced by Children

The four most significant climate change problems and disasters children experience in our communities are the following:



Garbage problem
(72%)



Water pollution
(68%)



Air pollution
(48%)



Extreme Heat/Heat Wave
(36%)

Only 10% of those surveyed chose frequent flooding as most live in urban areas.

In contrast, during the FGDs, most of the participants highlighted frequent flooding as their most significant climate problem, most likely because of them being from rural areas.



“Every year during rainy seasons, there are floods in our area and it usually lasts about 1-2 months. Our village faces this problem yearly. Our house becomes flooded and some of us have to go to monasteries as a temporary shelter. Many children face water-washed diseases at these times too.”

(Child participant, Amarapura FGD)



B. Impacts of Climate Change & Disasters on Children’s Lives

The aspects of children’s lives that have been negatively impacted by the consequences of climate change and disasters the most are the following:



**Family Livelihood
(72%)**



**Physical Health & Mental Health
(both at 46%)**



**Education
(42%)**



**Community Life
(24%)**

“Because of floods, our parents can’t go to work and at these times our livelihood gets affected too. We feel stressed and we can’t sleep well because it’s often dangerous”
(Child participant, Amarapura FGD)

“We couldn’t continue our education for months because our whole village was flooded”
(Child participant, Amarapura FGD)



C. Children's Level of Worry Over Climate Change & Disasters

Majority of the survey respondents said that they feel moderately worried about climate change and disasters.

- **43%** are moderately worried
- **27%** are very worried
- **25%** are a little worried
- **4%** are extremely worried

"Whenever it gets too hot, I'm worried about my parents. Since they're getting old I'm afraid they'll get heat strokes and be in undesirable situations"
(Child participant, Yangon FGD)



D. How Children Feel about Climate Change & Disasters

The following are the survey respondents' emotions towards the threat of climate change and disasters:

- **44%** felt worried and concerned
- Another **18%** said they are afraid of what is about to come
- Others emphasized on management of garbage disposal (**6%**)
- Some suggested to plant and stop cutting trees (**5%**)



E. Children's Knowledge of Climate Change & Disasters:

The majority of the survey respondents (**35%**) rated their **knowledge on climate change and disaster impacts** as moderate, giving themselves a **score of 5 out of 10**. Others had the following ratings:

- **26%** rated themselves 4/10
- **14%** rated themselves 7/10
- **11%** rated themselves as 6/10
- **6%** rated themselves as 3/10

F. Children's Motivation to Participate in Environmental Activities

Majority of the survey respondents (41%) said they are motivated to take part in environmental activities. Others have different levels of motivation as shown below:

- 40% said they are somewhat motivated.
- Only 14% said that they are very motivated to engage in environmental activities.
- The remaining 6% said they are somewhat not motivated.

Their sources of motivation to take action on climate change are the following:

- Better lives for future generations (73%)
- Love of plants (44%)
- Wildlife love (33%)
- Leisure (32%)
- Upgrading personal knowledge (around 31%)

Their sources of demotivation are the following:

- I do not have the resources or money to practice environment-friendly activities. (49%)
- I do not have enough knowledge about climate change. (40%)
- I cannot change myself and the way I do things. (28%)
- People in my community do not care about climate change. (26%)
- I am not demotivated. (6%)





G. Children's Knowledge of and Commitment to Mitigation

Most of the respondents indicated that all the activities on the list in the questionnaire have big impacts, but they cited the following activities as the ones having the most significant impact on mitigating climate change and disasters:

- Planting trees **(100%)**
- Not using plastic bags **(96%)**
- Spreading awareness **(94%)**
- Composting **(91%)**
- Waste sorting system **(90%)**

Meanwhile, the top five activities that they often do are the following:

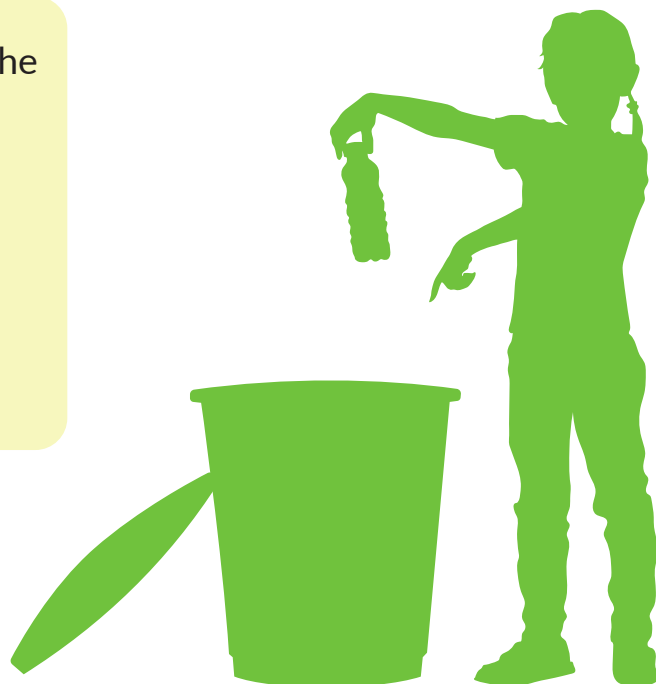
- Walking
- Food waste reduction
- Rational use of water
- Public Transport
- Waste sorting system/
Spreading Awareness

The ones which they sometimes do the most are the following:

- Collecting garbage
- Bicycling
- Planting trees
- No plastic bags
- Donate clothes/Energy
consumption efficiency

The ones which they rarely do the most are the following:

- Composting
- Organic foods
- Using firewood
- Public Transport
- Waste sorting system





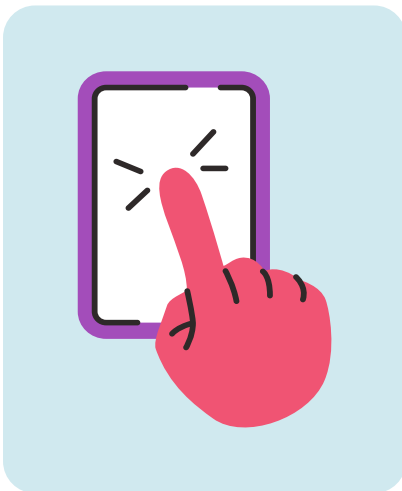
H. Children's Preparedness for Disasters

Majority of the survey respondents (30%) rated their level of preparedness for disasters as 5 out of 10 or moderate. Others had the following self-ratings:

- 20% rated themselves 4/10
- 12% rated themselves 7/10
- 11% rated themselves 6/10

These are the top tools or training that they say help them prepare for any natural disasters that may happen:

- Received training in school (62%)
- Received training in community (49%)
- Family emergency plan (31%)
- Disaster kit or emergency bag (24%)



I. Children's Sources of Information & Preferred Platforms for Learning about Climate Change & Disasters

The respondents' top sources of information on climate change and disasters include:

- TV News channel (64%)
- Social Media (63%)
- Classes in school (62%)
- Children's clubs in the community (38%)
- Textual or video platforms (37%)
- Discussions with family & Children's club in school (31%)
- 9% also said they do not have any source of information about climate change and disasters.



Their preferred platforms for learning about climate change and disasters include:

- Social Media - **79%**
- TV news channel - **34%**
- Classes in school - **32%**
- Audiovisual platforms & children's club in the community - **18%**
- Radio - **16%**

J. Children's Contributions

- Children have been recycling garbage around their schools
- Children have been planting trees at schools, rural areas, and other places
- Children leaders have made knowledge-sharing sessions in rural areas concerning using plastic
- Children also can be seen disposing of trash with care for their environments

Regarding the efficiency of awareness campaigns, one of the adult participants in Mawlamyine said, *"It's effective. Not at 100% but it's working at least 75% I suppose. But after the project when the country is in chaos, the local authorities took little to no accountability. So, I think this is the reason why the campaign doesn't reach its full potential."*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the findings from our study, we recommend the following actions to be taken by different members of our community:

For community and local leaders:



- Provide educational support to children in rural areas so they could be better informed about climate change
- Spread awareness about garbage problems and how it is negatively affecting communities
- Help the children understand what is causing their problems and motivate them to help in making a change
- Provide medical support for children who are struggling with health problems because of climate change



For teachers:

- Educate the children about climate change in a more interesting way (e.g. incorporating cartoons or fun animations in teaching)
- Also, we would like to note that better education and disaster risk reduction trainings would help a lot if provided sufficiently. Currently in our country as well as the whole of Southeast Asia, there have been a lot of unnecessary casualties because of the lack of training and framework.



For children and young people:



- Continue to engage in online and offline activities that help mitigate climate change and disaster impacts
- Continue to spread awareness about climate change both online and offline
- Reach out to adults and peers for support in engaging in and implementing activities





World Vision is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities to reach their full potential by tackling the root causes of poverty and injustice. World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender.



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