



Strengthening Bottom-Up Implementation of Local Education Boards for Myanmar's Federal Democratic Transition: An Action Research Study in Areas Administered by EROs and Resistance Forces

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List of Acronyms

CDM	Civil Disobedience Movement
CMT	Curriculum Management Team
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPH	Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw
DoPs	Division of Powers
EC	Executive Council
EROs	Ethnic Resistance Organizations
FDC	Federal Democracy Charter
FGD	Focal Group Discussion
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
ILO	International Labour Organization
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
KIC	Karen Information Center
KII	Key Information Interview
KSCC	Karenni State Consultative Council
KSIE	Karenni State Interim Education
LEBs	Local Education Boards
MSFC	Mon State Federal Council
MTBMLE	Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education
NUCC	National Unity Consultative Council
NUG	National Unity Government
SAC	State Administration Council
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TOR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

**“Strengthening Bottom-Up Implementation of Local Education Boards for Myanmar’s
Federal Democratic Transition: An Action Research Study in Areas Administered by
EROs and Resistance Forces”**

Executive Summary

The education system in Myanmar has been undergoing major changes since the military coup in 2021. Airstrikes are particularly damaging in conflict-affected and ethnic-controlled regions. By establishing local communities, ethnic education departments, and resistance authorities, the local education boards (LEBs) were created in areas like Kayah/Karenni, Sagaing, Magway, and Mon to ensure long-term primary education. These boards, which are made up of educators, students, and young intellectuals who took part in the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), have taken on duties such as curriculum development and instruction, teacher recruitment and quality enhancement, local school budgeting, and school administration. A key component of Myanmar's practical future federal education system is the emergence of decentralized, community-led educational governance institutions.

In order to show that bolstering the bottom-up implementation of local education boards is a potent tool for Myanmar's transition to a federal democracy, this study intends to give a thorough understanding of local education governance structures, financial management and accountability, teacher development, access to education, quality, and coordination of LEBs and CDMs. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), UNESCO's 2030 Education Framework, International Humanitarian Law (IHL), and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) are just a few of the international legal frameworks and interim domestic legal policies that highlight the difficulties in implementing children's right to education in ethnically diverse and conflict-affected areas.

The study used a qualitative methodology, conducting four regional focus groups via Zoom, semi-structured interviews with sixteen participants from the target regions, and an examination of operational guidelines, legal policy papers, and literature. Five recurrent thematic areas were found in the study. The results demonstrate that LEBs and CDMers continue to work together with genuine passion to uphold educational sustainability and development and enhance their local government, even in the face of scarce resources and financial and security obstacles..

All things considered, this study offers evidence-based recommendations for bolstering bottom-up governance within the educational system of Myanmar. It contributes to the long-term planning of a federal democratic education framework as well as the provision of

educational services in areas impacted by conflict. It emphasizes the vital role that local education boards play in guaranteeing equity, inclusiveness, and sustainability of primary education. This research can contribute to the development of education policies or regulations that support decentralization and practical implementation in Myanmar by recording the creative endeavors and difficulties faced by LEBs at the local level.

Abstract

Since Myanmar's military coup in 2021, the national education system has faced widespread disruption. Thousands of teachers, education staff, students, and young intellectuals joined the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), creating alternative education networks to sustain learning amid the collapse of formal institutions. Local governance systems have persisted in developing in spite of the State Administrative Council's (SAC) targeted repression, which has included airstrikes, school closures, and arrests. Local Education Boards (LEBs) have developed to oversee schools, coordinate instruction, and guarantee primary education access in regions governed by Ethnic Resistance Organizations (EROs) and resistance forces. These locally run institutions, which show the interaction between emergent institutional adaptation and community resilience, are an early and useful example of decentralized government. Using a qualitative research design, the study integrates evidence from semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis across regions including Karenni, Mon, Sagaing, and Magway. The research uses thematic analysis to examine five aspects: governance and structure; access and equity; financial management and accountability; teacher development; and policy implementation. It draws from literature on federalism, decentralization, and local governance (Anderson, 2008; Elazar, 1995; Bray & Varghese, 2011; Smoke, 2015). The results emphasize how crucial it is to give local institutions the authority to advance accountability, equality, and conflict-sensitive educational reform as Myanmar moves toward a federal democracy. The analysis indicates that the official establishment and empowerment of Local Education Boards as decentralized institutional mechanisms is crucial for both the development of a federal education framework based on democratic participation from community levels and the sustainability of education during armed conflict.

Key words: Bottom-up, Education Federalism, Local Governance, Ethnic, Resistance Force

1. Introduction & Problem Statement

Myanmar's governance capacity has weakened unevenly since the 2021 military coup, severely affecting education delivery in conflict-affected areas governed by local resistance authorities and Ethnic Resistance Organizations (EROs). Insecurity, displacement, and resource shortages forced many schools and teachers to rely on community-based and home-centered teaching arrangements to keep learning going. Within these locally controlled areas,

Local Education Boards (LEBs) emerged gradually as coordinating bodies linking teachers, parents, and education administrators at the township and village levels.

It is essential to comprehend how these bottom-up governance strategies support education in times of crisis and why they are important for Myanmar's upcoming federal democratic change. This essay makes the case that the nation's education governance in transition can learn a lot from the experiences and adaptable tactics of local education actors.

Myanmar's educational system has been severely disrupted since the coup, particularly in areas where official institutions have weakened or retreated. In the absence of official government structures, local communities, ethnic education departments, and resistance administrations have taken up major responsibility for education in Karenni, Mon, Sagaing, and Magway. These initiatives now revolve around Local Education Boards, which were established with the help of educators, students, instructors, and young thinkers associated with the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM). While CDM players participate through teaching, administrative work, and community-based projects, they are in charge of curriculum adaptation, budgeting, teacher assignments, and school administration. This study looks at the governance implications of a future federal education system and how LEBs and CDM participants work together to maintain education.

The importance of these initiatives extends beyond providing services right away. According to international law, LEBs and CDM actors are essential in defending children's right to an education. While Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966) requires nations to guarantee progressive access to elementary education for all, Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948) acknowledges education as a fundamental human right. Global frameworks, such as Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) and UNESCO's Education 2030 Agenda, place even more emphasis on inclusive, equitable, and high-quality education for all students. Despite the state's collapse, CDM teachers, students, and community leaders' ongoing participation in LEBs is a tangible attempt to fulfill these rights.

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) guidelines are also followed by LEBs and CDM actors. The obligation of all parties to defend schools and children's access to education is emphasized by the Geneva Conventions, its Additional Protocols, and UN Security Council resolutions on education in conflict. To provide safe and ongoing education in accordance with IHL duties, coordination between LEBs and CDM networks has been crucial in Myanmar's war-affected areas, where civilian infrastructure has regularly been targeted.

Although they frequently encounter difficulties with unequal governance, limited administrative capacity, and financial constraints, research on education in conflict situations demonstrates that community-led education systems frequently arise when governments are unable to provide basic services (Dryden-Peterson, 2011; South & Lall, 2018). This dynamic is exemplified in post-coup Myanmar, where state, ethnic, community, resistance, and CDM-linked education actors coexist in an unstable environment (INEE, 2023). The research on decentralization indicates that when local governance is backed by clearly defined structures, it can improve accountability and responsiveness (Bray & Varghese, 2011). However, little is known about how LEBs operate internally. By examining how LEBs—which are mostly made up of CDM members, instructors, and students—organize governance, manage resources, and collaborate with other authorities, this study aims to close that gap.

The study uses a qualitative research technique and incorporates online focus groups, semi-structured interviews with sixteen participants from five locations, and document analysis of pertinent policies and guidelines. It poses two primary queries:

1. How do Local Education Boards in areas governed by EROs and resistance forces organize governance, financial management, and accountability mechanisms to sustain primary education?
2. How can bottom-up governance through LEBs improve access, quality, and coordination in preparation for a future federal education system in Myanmar?

The study's objectives are to identify how LEBs carry out local education governance, handle finances responsibly, and maintain transparency, and to develop strategies for strengthening these practices. By addressing these questions, the research provides new insights into how collaboration between LEBs and CDM actors promotes education continuity in face of conflict and political breakdown, bridging international human rights standards with ongoing local policy initiatives.

Problem Statement

Communities in areas controlled by resistance authorities and Ethnic Resistance Organizations (EROs) have been forced to assume duties previously handled by the state as a result of Myanmar's education system becoming divided since the military coup in 2021. In these regions, where there is a lack of a functional national framework, population dislocation, and instability, Local Education Boards (LEBs) have taken on a pivotal role in maintaining basic education.

According to new research, LEBs vary greatly in terms of their decision-making procedures, governance frameworks, and degrees of community involvement, which leads to disparate regional practices. Another difficulty with financial management is that, although some boards handle local donations and donor assistance, many don't follow set protocols. This results in a lack of accountability, uneven documentation, and occasionally conflicts over the allocation of limited resources. There are still gaps between policy recommendations and actual execution because of the disarray in coordination between ERO education departments, community organizations, and resistance administrations.

The technical capacity of many board members is limited by their voluntary service and frequent lack of training in financial control, planning, or performance monitoring. There is still a dearth of systematic study on the operation and effects of LEBs, despite their growing significance and quick growth. At a time when discussions regarding Myanmar's future federal education system are emphasizing bottom-up governance and locally grounded authority, it is imperative to comprehend how these boards make decisions, manage resources, and maintain accountability.

By examining the changing practices of LEBs and evaluating how improved local governance might facilitate more equal, open, and coordinated education delivery throughout Myanmar's transition to a federal democratic system, this study aims to close this gap.

2. Research Questions & Objectives

Questions for Research

1. How do local education boards in areas administered by EROs and resistance forces organize and implement governance, financial management, and accountability mechanisms to sustain primary education?
2. How can strengthening bottom-up governance through local education boards enhance access, quality, and coordination in preparation for Myanmar's future federal system?

Research Objectives

- To examine how Local Education Boards in ERO- and resistance-administered areas organize and implement governance, financial management, and accountability mechanisms to sustain primary education.
- To assess how stronger bottom-up governance can improve access, quality, and coordination in primary education, while informing the design of a future federal education framework for Myanmar.

3. Literature Review

Long-term conflict, centralization, and language constraints have influenced Myanmar's educational system, giving rise to several rival educational systems long before the military takeover in 2021. State schools, community-led projects, monastery schools, and ethnic education departments all developed separately, with own administrative strategies, curriculum priorities, and governance frameworks. This division became more pronounced during the coup as local communities, resistance groups, and Ethnic Resistance Organizations (EROs) increased their own educational institutions and governmental power declined. This suggests that the governance of education in Myanmar has traditionally relied on diverse but disjointed systems that now function even more independently in the face of governmental breakdown.

Because they offer culturally appropriate instruction, local decision-making authority, and more flexibility in times of instability, non-state schools have become crucial in conflict-affected areas, according to existing studies (South & Lall, 2018; INEE, 2023). This implies that in situations where traditional state systems are ineffective, decentralized educational alternatives might provide adaptive benefits. In locations where state institutions have withdrawn, Local Education Boards (LEBs) have formed as coordinating organizations that support curriculum adaptation, school management, and budgeting. Despite their contribution to local resilience, these boards' governance structures are still primarily informal, which reflects both institutional fragility and community ownership.

The potential of locally administered systems to enhance accountability and responsiveness is further supported by scholarly work on decentralization and federal governance, particularly in contexts where central authority is disputed or weak (Anderson, 2008; Bray & Varghese, 2011). This suggests that in a future federal framework, LEBs may be crucial in forming bottom-up education governance. However, the efficacy of such arrangements seems to be varied, mostly dependent on local legitimacy, coordination, and ability.

Although there is still a dearth of empirical research on LEBs in Myanmar, new reports highlight resource inequities, poor financial management, and inconsistent governance (INEE, 2023; Tea Circle, 2024). According to these findings, community-led groups frequently struggle to standardize processes or adequately document their actions, even if they cover important gaps left by the state. In contrast, research on other conflict-affected contexts demonstrates that community-managed systems can function as successful transitional governance mechanisms even in the face of resource constraints when they are backed by more comprehensive institutional direction (Dryden-Peterson, 2011). This contrast emphasizes how

crucial it is to set up explicit accountability mechanisms in order to strike a balance between coherence and autonomy in local governance systems.

Overall, the literature assessment shows a number of interconnected trends: communities operate as de facto educational providers; institutional capacity shortages continue to exist; and governance decentralization frequently develops naturally during conflict. This implies that any attempt to change Myanmar's federal education system must acknowledge the country's current informal governance environments and enhance them rather than replace them. Thus, by investigating how LEBs organize governance, manage resources, and uphold accountability in times of crisis, this study directly fills a significant research gap and adds to the ongoing discussions about how bottom-up governance can stabilize Myanmar's educational transition to a federal democratic system.

4. Research Design and Methodology

In order to investigate how Local Education Boards (LEBs) organize and carry out education governance, financial management, and accountability within the larger processes of federalization and decentralization, in cooperation with Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) actors, this study uses a qualitative research design. The study sees LEBs as emerging governance mechanisms that represent both community agency and adaptive institutional behavior under conflict settings, guided by the ideas of participatory institutionalism and governance theory. Therefore, the research approach integrates theoretical knowledge of how localized governance aids in state transformation and the reconstruction of public service delivery in transitional environments with empirical investigation.

To connect the creation of evidence with practical reflection among education stakeholders, an action research methodology was employed. By using this method, the study was able to document both the lived experiences of board members, educators, and community members who uphold education in contentious circumstances as well as formal institutions like policies and administrative procedures.

Data Collection Methods

Three interrelated qualitative methods were applied to ensure triangulation and analytical depth:

1. Semi-structured Interviews:

Sixteen interviews were conducted with participants from Sagaing, Magway, Karenni, and Mon regions. The interviewees included local education board members, regional education representatives, CDM teachers, community-based school leaders, interim education council members, and university faculty. These conversations generated insights into

governance practices, financial decision-making, and mechanisms of accountability at township and regional levels.

2. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):

Four FGDs were organized—one in each target region—to gather collective perspectives and identify shared challenges. For example, in Sagaing, discussions were held with the local education board to examine its coordination with CDM networks. Data collection covered four major regions: Karenni, Mon, Sagaing, and Magway, ensuring geographic diversity and enabling cross-regional comparison of governance arrangements and decision-making processes.

3. Document Analysis

To contextualize empirical findings, policy and legal documents including national education guidelines, interim regulations, and locally issued directives, were systematically reviewed. This analysis assessed the alignment between local governance practices and broader policy frameworks, highlighting areas of convergence and divergence with national and international education standards.

By combining many sources and viewpoints on LEB governance, the combination of focus groups, interviews, and document analysis improved the findings' credibility and triangulation.

Data Analysis

A thematic analysis framework organized around five predetermined thematic categories was used to analyze the data:

1. Governance and institutional structure
2. Access and Equity
3. Financial management and accountability
4. Development of Teachers
5. Education policy and implementation

To enable comparisons at the regional and stakeholder levels, interview and focus group discussion transcripts were methodically tagged and grouped within these topics. Through this process, common governance patterns, common experiences, and notable differences between the ways in which CDM participants and LEBs continue to provide education in the face of conflict were found.

Additionally, the analytical framework served as a link between theoretical viewpoints on decentralized government and empirical data. It reveals how local actors help rebuild educational systems during times of political transition by placing LEBs along a continuum

between unofficial community authority and burgeoning institutional legitimacy. The analysis links pertinent national policies and international legal norms controlling education in unstable and conflict-affected environments to the intersections between governance, resource management, and educational practice by arranging data around the five themes.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were carefully observed throughout the interview and focus group discussions. All participants received easily understandable information prior to data collection regarding the study's objectives, the voluntary nature of their involvement, and how the data would be used. All interviewers and focus group members gave their informed consent before to each session, and they were assured that they would be treated with respect and decency. They were also given the chance to ask questions and revoke their consent at any moment. All information was kept private in compliance with research ethics, and delicate inquiries that might injure people physically or psychologically were avoided. Additionally, participants were guaranteed the freedom to voluntarily remove any information they submitted at any moment if it made them uncomfortable or for any other reason.

5. The Five Thematic Areas of Local Education Boards (LEBs)

Local Education Boards (LEBs), established by CDMers in regions dominated by resistance forces and Ethnic Resistance Organizations (EROs), have proven crucial to the ongoing functioning of primary education since the coup in 2021. LEBs, which are composed of CDM teachers, school personnel, students, and young community people, are in charge of extra duties beyond standard school administration as well as human resource requirements in order to guarantee the continuous operation of numerous state administrative institutions. These boards are not centrally appointed; rather, they are a type of governance that arises from bottom-up community leadership as needed. They carry out the function of teachers, manage community budgets, decide on curricula, and coordinate daily operations with local education authorities. In the pursuit of democratically accountable local systems, this effort might be viewed as a significant model of bottom-up government. Their positions shed light on the potential distribution of power and duties at various levels in Myanmar's future federal educational system.

Five recurrent thematic areas—governance and structure, access and equity, financial management and accountability, teacher development, and education policy and implementation—that arose from the examination of research data—interviews, focus groups,

and document analysis—are used to organize the study's findings. Examining these themes makes it clearer how LEBs function in real-world situations and where they encounter the most difficulties. The findings also reinforce local education boards (LEBs), promote alignment between regional traditions and broader objectives, and offer a strong basis for policymaking recommendations. for the democratic transition at the federal level.

5.1 Governace & Structure

Local Education Boards' Ascent to De Facto Power

Since the military coup in 2021, Local Education Boards (LEBs) have become de facto education authorities in several parts of Myanmar. LEBs have taken on duties ranging from teacher deployment and curriculum adaptation to local budgeting, school administration, and collaboration with community actors in situations where conventional state education systems have withdrawn or collapsed. These organizations, which demonstrate strong community ownership and participatory governance, are mostly made up of students, young intellectuals, education personnel, and teachers from the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM). LEBs are positioned as a workable basis for any future decentralized or federal education architecture, and their creation is a functional reaction to governance gaps.

Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, the Sustainable Development Goal 4 commitment to inclusive, high-quality lifelong learning, and other international commitments to guarantee universal and equitable access to education are all in line with this bottom-up governance model. In addition, it addresses the urgent humanitarian need to safeguard education during armed conflict, especially in situations when centralized authorities have failed to protect personnel and educational facilities.

The Argument for Decentralized Education Governance and Comparative Federalism

In post-authoritarian and post-conflict contexts, education governance is regularly recognized by comparative federalism literature as a crucial location for decentralization and democratic engagement. Delegating education authority to subnational governments improves policy responsiveness, builds community trust, and accommodates ethnic and linguistic variety, according to research on federal systems like Ethiopia, Nepal, and India (McGarry and O'Leary 2007; Watts 2008). According to these research, local education boards operate best when they have significant decision-making authority over curriculum adaptation, school administration, and community involvement in addition to administrative duties.

The new resistance-era education governance structures in Myanmar, where education is increasingly run by state-, township-, and community-level organizations rather than a centralized ministry, clearly reflect these comparative lessons. Thus, education governance emerges as a crucial institutional setting for public involvement, legitimacy-building, and democratic change.

International Law and Pluralism in Institutions

International legal frameworks reinforce the validity of bottom-up education governance. According to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1999), states are required by the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights to respect institutional pluralism in education and to permit communities to establish and run educational institutions in accordance with minimal standards. From the standpoint of public involvement, bottom-up governance systems also support peoples' rights to engage in cultural and educational activities, especially in transitional settings where legitimacy has historically been weakened by centralized control.

Therefore, strengthening LEBs is in line with both international human rights standards that emphasize equity, participation, and community agency in the delivery of education as well as comparative constitutional practice.

Disintegration of Governance, Disagreement, and the Decline of Centralized Power

Significant governance and structural flaws in Myanmar's educational system are exposed by the literature and media currently in publication, especially in areas devastated by conflict like Karenni, Sagaing, Magway, and Kayin. In townships like Demoso and Depayin, frequent attacks on school infrastructure, such as airstrikes and shelling, show how incapable the government is of maintaining institutional safeguards that have historically kept civilian education apart from military operations (Kantarwaddy times 2024; 2025; Ayeyarwaddy Times 2025). These occurrences are indicative of a larger breakdown in the governing systems of education, as schools are subject to direct violence due to the absence or ineffectiveness of institutional authorities. In many disputed areas, this has led to the collapse of the fundamental administrative capability needed to maintain education, such as guaranteeing safety, continuity, and oversight.

Institutional legitimacy and physical destruction are just two examples of governance failure during conflict. The public loses faith in centralized governance when educational systems are unable to ensure continuity or protection. Reports from the media constantly show

that communities view recurring school attacks as proof of a breakdown in systemic governance rather than as isolated security occurrences. This view supports proposals for alternative, decentralized government structures that can better address local circumstances and adds to a larger critique of centralized authority.

Contested Domestic Legal Structures and Interim Federal Responses

The domestic education law in Myanmar is still hotly debated. The State Administration Council administers and amends the National Education Law (2014) and the Basic Education Law (2019), which remain formal statutes in junta-controlled areas. However, resistance actors generally reject the legitimacy of these laws, especially those pertaining to centralized control and restrictions on ethnic language instruction. The Federal Democracy Education Policy and the creation of an Interim Federal Education Council are two alternative policy tools that the National Unity Government (NUG) and affiliated organizations have promoted in response.

Decentralization and shared power are key components of the Federal Democracy Education Policy, which clearly describes an education governance structure based on federal democratic principles. Instead of being centralized in a single ministry, decision-making authority is dispersed throughout several levels, including states, townships, schools, and the federal government. In order to reflect public expectations for participatory governance and accountability, education councils at all levels are intended to include representatives of educators, students, parents, and community members (Federal Democracy Education Policy Draft 2021).

Regional Policy Frameworks as Practical Proof of Federal Governance

Frameworks for education at the state and regional levels also show how federal democratic ideals are being put into effect. The Mon State Federal Education Council's guidelines describe a governance structure in Mon State that disperses authority among committees and councils as opposed to consolidating it in one body. While the presence of teachers, students, and community representatives embeds public participation within school governance, clearly defined leadership roles, meeting protocols, and committee tasks show an attempt to formalize accountability and openness. This structure places education governance as a component of a larger democratic transition, where legitimacy is established by collective monitoring as opposed to centralized authority (Mon State Federal Education Council 2023, & Interviewee MO -01; MO-03 2025).

Township Education Boards (TEBs) are decentralized governance entities in charge of overseeing education at the township level in the Sagaing and Magway Regions, according to

the TEBs' Terms of Reference. With distinct responsibilities for board members, chairpersons, finance officers, and coordinators at the local level, governance is organized around collective leadership. In contrast to individual authority, decision-making is clearly presented as non-centralized and prioritizes responsibility, transparency, and group consensus. The presence of CDM teachers, students, parents, and community members demonstrates tight connection with federal democratic values and indicates significant public engagement and local ownership (National Unity Government, Ministry of Education 2023 & Interviews SG- 03; SG-04; SG05; MG -03; MG-05 2025).

Another example is Karenni State's interim education policy, which outlines a governance structure based on local self-government and decentralization. In place of Myanmar's historically centralized system of education governance, the State Education Council now has more authority over education laws, administration, and execution, with additional authority being distributed to township, community, and school levels. The policy upholds ethnic nations' rights to self-determination and institutional participation—two fundamental components of the federal constitution—by formally acknowledging ethnic and community-based educational systems. The public's desire for an accountable, participative, and culturally sensitive education system is reflected in this governance structure in the context of democratic transition (Karenni State Consultative Council 2024, Interviews KN -01; KN-03, 2025).

Primary Data : Lived Experiences of Bottom-Up Governance: Insights from Interviews and Focus Groups

Interview and FGDs data consistently show that Local Education Boards serve as bottom-up governance institutions, not just temporary administrative setups. Data from interviews conducted in Karenni, Mon, Sagaing, and Magway consistently show that Local Education Boards (LEBs) function as institutions of governance that are legitimated by the community rather than as administrative entities that are imposed from without. Interviewees in Karenni stressed that volunteer teachers stepped in to prevent educational collapse, and that education activities arose mostly in response to displacement and learning loss during military offensives (KN-01; KN-03 2025). Communities confer with parents, elders, and local leaders prior to opening schools, demonstrating that authority comes from social agreement rather than official governmental sanction. Interviewees from Magway and Sagaing pointed out that the decision-making power at the LEB level enabled quicker, context-sensitive responses to school closures, teacher deployment, and security threats (SG-01 2025; MG-02 2025). These accounts

highlight how governance legitimacy comes from closeness to the communities impacted, rather than from formal state recognition.

School committees, treasurers, accountants, and audits are among the distinct positions that define governance structures at the school and township levels. This reflects intentional efforts to institutionalize responsibility even in situations of disagreement (KN-01; KN-02 2025). Democratic principles of participation and shared accountability are reinforced by decision-making processes that rely on group discussion and internal vote procedures (MO-01; MO-03 2025)

According to interviewees in Magway and Sagaing, LEBs are inclusive organizations made up of educators, parents, and student representatives that make choices about operations, curriculum, and school administration together (MG 01; MG03 2025). Early governance issues, however, were also noted, especially conflicts between newly established boards, CDM teachers, and senior educators (MG-02; MG-04; MG-05 2025). These conflicts highlight the fact that democratic government is a continuously negotiated process that necessitates institutional learning and trust-building rather than instant unity.

Interview data demonstrates strong support for bottom-up education governance, particularly among those actively involved in Local Education Boards (LEBs). Local educational requirements might be addressed more quickly and contextually thanks to the decision-making authority at the LEB level, according to interviewees from the Magway Region, including MG-01 and MG-02 2025. Similarly, delegates from the Sagaing Region (SG-01 & SG-02, 2025) highlighted how decentralized governance reduced bureaucratic delays and increased community trust in educational institutions.

Focus group discussions reinforced these conclusions by portraying local education governance as an essential component of the federal democratic transition rather than a temporary administrative fix. These perspectives underscore a widespread conviction that authority is more legitimately exercised when it is closer to the people affected by educational programs. Focus group discussion (FGD) participants in the Sagaing and Magway regions consistently associated LEBs with consultation, democratic participation, and communal responsibility. Education governance acts as a platform for democratic learning, as evidenced by the numerous participants who stated that involvement in education decision-making enhanced their understanding of federal ideals in practical contexts. The more broad federalism theory, which emphasizes how decentralized institutions promote democratic consolidation when people actively participate in decision-making, is compatible with this experience of bottom-up government (Watts 2008).

There are significant regional variations in the Local Education Boards' (LEBs) coordination and governance systems. LEBs function under more defined mandates and policy frameworks in regions with more established ethnic education departments or stronger interregional administrations, enabling more organized implementation. On the other hand, coordination frequently depends on informal communication channels and personal networks in areas with lower institutional capacity. Such interregional partnerships can work well in the short term, but they require institutional ties, steady finance, and well-thought-out policy support to be sustained over the long run.

According to the research, LEBs have developed as a type of decentralized governance for education, arising to meet various local demands when there is inconsistent governmental authority. Their organizational structures are always changing to reflect the dynamics of politics and warfare; they are neither uniform nor rigid. The results show that LEBs need more precise mandates, well-defined operational mechanisms, and robust governance support systems to ensure their sustainable contribution to Myanmar's future federal education framework, even though these locally based initiatives have been essential in maintaining education under difficult circumstances.

5.2 Access and Equity

Access to Education as a Federal Democratic Commitment

In places affected by violence, access to education, which is run by resistance forces and Ethnic Resistance Organizations (EROs), has become unpredictable and unequal. Many areas have experienced school closures, recurrent migration, and the loss of government-funded services since the coup in 2021. Significant disparities have resulted from these disruptions, particularly for students who depend on ethnic-language or community-based education, those living in isolated communities, and those residing in areas of ongoing war. Local Education Boards (LEBs) have been in charge of setting up alternate classrooms in safer areas, organizing volunteer and CDM instructors, and reopening learning facilities. Their efforts are now an essential element of how education is maintained in the absence of functional state structures, and their involvement has allowed many children to continue learning despite instability.

Linguistic and Rights-Based Views

The quality of learning varies greatly across regions due to differences in teacher availability, learning materials, and financial support. (SG-05; MG03; KN-02; MO-02 2025) Inequity, however, continues to be a major problem. Current barriers to accessing early

childhood education, such as mobility restrictions, displacement, and safety risks, influence whether children can attend classes regularly. LEBs try to address these gaps by using flexible enrollment processes, adjusting school schedules, and moving classes when communities are threatened. Although these tactics aid in preserving access during emergencies, they are unable to completely make up for the absence of reliable systems or well-coordinated policy recommendations. Therefore, it is crucial to develop LEBs by giving them more defined tasks, ensuring that they receive continuous support from interim and ethnic education authorities, and gaining recognition within newly emerging federal governance structures. (MO-02; KN-02 2025) By doing this, it would help guarantee that children's access to school is safeguarded as a fundamental right during the transition phase rather than being influenced by the degree of insecurity in their community.

International human rights principles uphold the state's urgent, nondiscriminatory duty to provide access to education. States must provide free and compulsory basic education, with special attention to vulnerable and disadvantaged populations, as required by Article 13 of the ICESCR and Articles 28–29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (United Nations 1966; United Nations 1989). Rigid, highly centralized school systems frequently exclude displaced and marginalized students, while flexible, community-based models are more successful in maintaining participation and lowering dropout rates, according to evidence from education in conflict-affected contexts (INEE 2016).

Language and cultural inclusion are directly linked to equity-focused education policy. Using learners' first languages in early schooling enhances learning outcomes and reduces dropout rates among ethnic minority children, according to UNESCO research on mother tongue-based multilingual education (UNESCO 2016). Delegating control over language policy in education to local levels may assist restore public confidence in state institutions, according to experience from federal transitions like Nepal's post-2006 reforms (Lawoti 2012). All of this data emphasizes how important it is to provide local school boards the authority to create inclusive access plans that take into account the identities, languages, and realities of their communities.

Equal access to education has been significantly hampered by armed conflict, especially for children in rural and displaced populations. Airstrikes and artillery attacks have reportedly caused population displacement in the Sagaing Region, resulting in extended school closures and significant disruptions to education (DVB 2025; Thanlwin Times 2024). In these situations, access to education is not upheld as a guaranteed right but rather depends on factors like mobility, safety, and the availability of community-based or informal learning

opportunities. Vulnerable communities have been further disadvantaged by the combined effects of displacement and instability, which has strengthened already-existing disparities in access to basic education.

Additionally, studies show that community-based support networks that formerly assisted in closing gaps in educational access are eroding. Community-managed schools, volunteer teacher programs, and parent-teacher collaboration frequently fail in displacement situations as families prioritize their immediate needs. This analysis shows that robust community and social structures are just as important to access and fairness in conflict-affected areas as policy commitments. Education systems become more exclusive when violence weakens these networks, depriving the most vulnerable kids of opportunities to learn.

Fair access to education is a foundational commitment of the new federal education system, according to the Federal Democracy Education Policy, which was provided by the National Unity Government (NUG) and the National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC). All students, regardless of their race, language, gender, handicap, geography, or status as displaced, will receive an inclusive education, according to the policy. Learners in rural and conflict-affected communities are given special attention. Public aspirations for an educational system that respects ethnic identity and implements long-standing structural disparities are reflected in the policy's support of mother tongue-based bilingual education and culturally sensitive courses. According to this vision, access to education is portrayed as a fundamental right connected to social justice, equity, and inclusion within a federal democratic framework, rather than solely as a service (Federal Democracy Education Policy Draft 2021).

State and Regional Policy Frameworks for Equity

Education policies at the state and regional levels demonstrate how subnational institutions are implementing the concepts of equity and access. The Mon State Federal Education Council highlights equity and access as two of the federal education vision's top concerns. With an emphasis on students who have previously been excluded because of war or remote location, its paradigm encourages inclusion across gender, race, language, handicap, and displacement status. The public's desire for an educational system that preserves identity and local context is shown in the acceptance of mother tongue-based instruction and culturally appropriate teaching. In a federal democratic government, these rules portray education as a fundamental right connected to social justice, rather than just a service (Mon State Federal Education Council 2023)

The Terms of Reference (TOR) for Township Education Boards in the **Sagaing and Magway regions** promote fairness through adaptable, community-based teaching strategies.

The TOR recognizes the various realities of local contexts, such as places where formal education has been disrupted by violence and insecurity. It ensures that learning continues even outside of traditional school settings by promoting adaptive education models backed by volunteers, teachers from the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), and community actors. The framework shows a dedication to identifying and lowering access hurdles for marginalized and conflict-affected learners by incorporating parents, students, and local education leaders in governance structures. In this sense, rather than applying policies consistently, fairness is sought through adaptation to local circumstances (National Unity Government, Ministry of Education 2023).

One of the most thorough explanations of equity and access in a federal education framework can be found at Karenni State. Its interim education strategy emphasizes universal access through inclusive, nondiscriminatory approaches and considers education as a vital human right. While acknowledging various learning pathways like home-based education, community learning centers, and non-formal education programs, it provides free and mandatory basic education. Children affected by conflicts, internally displaced people, students with disabilities, and residents of distant areas—groups frequently left out of state systems—are given particular attention under the strategy. In order to ensure that education delivery is in line with the principles of equity and substantive justice throughout political transition, the adoption of mother tongue-based multilingual education further addresses linguistic and cultural marginalization (Karenni State Consultative Council 2024).

Primary Data: Lived Experiences of Inequality and Local Responses

Unfair access to education remains a significant problem in conflict-affected areas, according to interview and focus group data (KN-02 2025, SG-02 2025), especially for displaced students and children residing in unstable rural areas (MG-02; MG-04 2025). Interviewees cited airstrikes as the most common and urgent barrier to continuing education. Classes are frequently halted in Karenni and Sagaing during times of aerial surveillance or continuous military operations, with the protection of the children coming first (KN-01 2025; SG-01 2025). In contrast, community-based education programs run by local education boards (LEBs) were described as more adaptive, inclusive, and resilient, providing flexible enrollment, temporary learning spaces, and the capacity to move swiftly during security disruptions (KN-03 2025; MG-01 2025). Teachers and education officers from Sagaing and Magway explained that centralized schooling systems are still ill-equipped to reach mobile populations or communities in insecure zones.

In situations involving displacement, equity issues are particularly serious. Children from different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds are brought together in refugee and internally displaced person (IDP) camps, yet there is still a severe lack of teachers who are trained to teach in many languages. Despite official pledges to equity and nondiscrimination, this gap hinders the successful implementation of inclusive education (Interview KN-01; KN-03 2025).

Security worries about student transfers from schools under SAC supervision further exacerbate access issues in Magway. According to interviewees, allowing returning students may raise the possibility of information leaks, which are closely linked to the fear of airstrikes. Examples of these leaks include the disclosure of school sites or teacher identities. As a result, Local Education Boards (LEBs) must make morally challenging choices that strike a balance between the need to ensure community safety and the right to education (MG-03 2025).

These differences were further contextualized via focus group discussions (FGDs) conducted in several areas, which demonstrated how inequity is experienced through language, culture, and safety. Access to education was found to be more dependent on local governance's ability to handle displacement and resolve security issues than on formal policy promises, according to participants from Magway and Sagaing (FGD 1 2025; FGD 2 2025). These participants emphasized how, in situations where movement or instability interfered with formal processes, local cooperation and decision-making affected whether children could continue their education.

Mother tongue-based education was widely supported by focus group participants, who saw it as a practical governance strategy that increases school retention and encourages parental involvement. In addition to improving access to basic education, they underlined that early primary instruction in local languages affirms learners' cultural identities and encourages them to participate in the community. In order to ensure continuity in learning opportunities, delegates also emphasized the urgent need for skilled human resources to expand instruction in local mother languages to the higher education level (FGD 1 2025; FGD 2 2025; FGD 3 2025). These viewpoints show how participatory governance at the local level can incorporate culturally sensitive practices that are frequently overlooked by national frameworks. Resource constraints were repeatedly cited by participants as a significant factor affecting educational equity and access. Local Education Boards (LEBs) are unable to provide necessary resources including educational materials, school lunches, transportation, and psychosocial assistance due to a lack of financing. Many LEBs rely on community contributions, which vary widely between locations and lead to unequal educational circumstances, in the lack of steady donor

financing. The sustainability and equity of education delivery in decentralized governance systems are called into question by these disparities.

The results essentially show how important LEBs are to preserving access to basic education in challenging and resource-constrained situations, especially for students who have been relocated or affected by conflict. However, access and equitable outcomes are still uneven and heavily impacted by institutional capability, resource limitations, and local security situations. In order to reduce regional gaps and improve inclusive education within Myanmar's developing federal education framework, data suggests that coordinated policy and resource support is necessary, even while decentralized governance permits adaptable and context-sensitive solutions.

5.3 Financial Management & Accountability

One of the biggest obstacles to maintaining basic education in regions run by resistance authorities and Ethnic Resistance Organizations (EROs) is still funding. Communities and Local Education Boards (LEBs) have depended on community fundraising, voluntary donations, the meager help of ethnic education departments, and modest aid from humanitarian actors ever since the centralized education system collapsed after the coup in 2021. These agreements have resulted in a patchwork of regional variations in informal and semi-formal financial systems. Such mechanisms reveal enduring structural vulnerabilities, such as financial instability, unequal resource distribution, and reliance on local economic capabilities, even while they also demonstrate a strong community commitment to maintaining access to education.

Federal Democratic Methods for Funding Education

Concerns about how to fund education and how financial duties are distributed among governmental levels have taken center stage in policy talks as Myanmar transitions to a federal democratic system. For the purpose of generating revenue, allocating funds, and monitoring spending, federal systems need well-defined procedures. Several of these tasks are already handled informally by local education boards through public reporting and community-based budgeting. However, these practices continue to be dispersed and extremely vulnerable to local interruptions due to the lack of coordination between the municipal, state, and federal levels.

Building on current community-led projects, recognizing capacity and accountability gaps, and implementing mechanisms for more fair resource sharing among regions are all necessary to develop a sustainable federal financing model for education. Emerging federal

models can be made more realistic and sensitive to the realities of communities impacted by conflict by coordinating financial policy with LEBs' lived experiences.

The National Unity Government (NUG) and the National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC) developed the Federal Democracy Education Policy, which outlines a framework for financial governance based on federal democratic ideals. It sees funding for education as a transparent and shared duty including all governmental levels. Funding for education is mostly the responsibility of state and municipal governments, with coordination, quality control, and standard-setting handled at the federal level. Concerns regarding too centralized control over educational resources are addressed by this balance, which represents public demand for decentralization and accountability. The policy reaffirms that financial control is essential to democratic legitimacy and public trust by connecting budget oversight and resource management to education councils (Federal Democracy Education Policy Draft 2021).

International research provides evidence in favor of this strategy. According to World Bank and OECD studies, fiscal decentralization improves the delivery of education services when combined with defined financial obligations, community involvement, and transparency systems (World Bank 2018; OECD 2019). Effective financial management is crucial in transitional democracies because insufficient control can exacerbate inequality and erode public trust. It is generally acknowledged that setting a minimum guaranteed percentage of national spending on education is an efficient way to preserve social investment during political change.

Integrity and involvement in the funding of education are also emphasized by international norms. According to the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, mismanagement and corruption in education budgets violate students' rights by taking funds away from them (UN Human Rights Council 2014). In fragile environments, empowering local education authorities to interact directly with donors while upholding accountability and openness can strengthen educational resilience and lessen reliance (Bray 2016). Thus, increasing LEBs' financial capability promotes more democratic governance and local control of educational resources.

In regions devastated by violence, poor financial management and a lack of accountability continue to be significant barriers to maintaining the provision of education. Myaelatt Athan and Red News Agency are two media outlets from central Myanmar that report on the frequent destruction of schools and the inconsistent funding for upkeep or restoration (Myaelatt Athan 2025; Red News Agency 2025). Systems for tracking spending, budgeting,

and investing in infrastructure are either nonexistent or very inconsistent in places lacking efficient administrative control.

The data demonstrates that education funding becomes erratic and ad hoc in the absence of predictable and accountable governance mechanisms. In order to maintain long-term education provision, communities are frequently compelled to rely on erratic local donations or temporary humanitarian support. This lack of financial certainty erodes responsibility, erodes openness, and maintains unequal access to education. Public confidence in both centralized and decentralized education governance is still low in the absence of stable funding sources, and cycles of disruption persist.

Frameworks for Subnational Financial Governance in Action

Subnational financial governance frameworks provide as examples of how state and township levels are implementing federal principles. The Mon State Federal Education Council's guidelines present financial management in Mon State as a shared duty based on accountability, openness, and public involvement. The framework acknowledges continued reliance on community donations and outside assistance while defining precise roles for financial reporting, expenditure monitoring, and budgeting. The policy highlights participatory supervision and group decision-making as crucial accountability tools rather than concentrating just on technological controls. In a transitional environment where institutional confidence must be restored through transparent and inclusive administration, this strategy reflects public expectations that education financing should uphold democratic ideals (Mon State Federal Education Council 2023).

The Terms of Reference (TOR) for Township Education Boards in Sagaing and Magway Regions provide comprehensive financial management practices intended to improve accountability and transparency at the township level. Boards must set up finance committees, maintain accurate financial records that are available to the public, and report to oversight authorities on a regular basis. Strict regulations forbid collecting student fees without authorization, and financial choices are determined collaboratively. In keeping with public concerns about financial abuse and the need for more democratic control over educational resources, the TOR also codifies community involvement through open reporting and collaborative decision-making. In a transitioning federal democracy, these clauses emphasize that financial control is seen as a basis for institutional credibility and public trust, in addition to being an administrative duty (National Unity Government, Ministry of Education 2023).

Transparency, sustainability, and public accountability are the cornerstones of Karenni's financial governance policies. A strategic commitment to long-term investment in human capital is demonstrated by the policy, which requires that education get at least 15% of the state's total budget (Karenni State Consultative Council 2024). Additionally, it permits educational institutions to interact directly with foreign donors as long as financial management follows established accountability guidelines and the "do no harm" principle. In response to ongoing worries about corruption and unfair resource allocation, these measures purposefully separate funding for education from opaque and military budget processes. When taken as a whole, these initiatives show a concerted attempt to provide equitable, open, and participatory financial governance that is in line with federal democratic ideals (Karenni State Consultative Council 2024).

Primary Data: Practitioners' and Communities' Views on Financial Accountability

Financial management has become a significant barrier as well as an area with clear local capacity. The National Unity Government (NUG) allotments, local taxes, community donations, lotteries, Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs), religious institutions, and diaspora contributions are just a few of the diverse sources of funding that are still dispersed and uncertain across regions (SG-01 2025; MG-01 2025).

These procedures imply that LEBs maintain sound financial management even in the face of severe resource limitations. However, their capacity to make strategic plans, make investments in school infrastructure, and promote ongoing teacher development is severely limited by the absence of reliable fiscal transfers and institutional finance channels (MO-01; MO-02 2025).

Due to a lack of financing, teacher compensation in Karenni State is still low and irregular, and Local Education Boards (LEBs) work with local armed groups to secure material support for school building (Interviews KN-01; KN-02 2025). Concerns regarding the sustainability of the community-based education approach are further raised by the fact that teachers in the Magway and Sagaing Regions frequently rely on meager stipends or donations from parents.

Many LEBs have a great commitment to financial responsibility and openness in spite of these constraints. In order to preserve institutional credibility and public trust, interviewees explained keeping thorough income and expenditure records, designating financial officers, and carrying out frequent audits—from bi-weekly to monthly (SG-01 2025). Parents and

community members are regularly given access to financial summaries, which strengthens social responsibility and local control.

In areas managed by resistance, interviewees frequently characterized education funding as erratic and weak. Despite having fewer resources, locally controlled funds were more transparent and closely matched with school needs than prior centralized funding arrangements, according to participants from Magway and Sagaing (MG-04 2025; KN-02 2025). Interviewees did, however, warn that decentralization without explicit rules could result in irregularities and financial hardship.

All regions' FGD members stressed that public oversight and engagement were the main ways that accountability was attained. Community members in Magway and Sagaing emphasized the value of transparent budget information sharing and group approval of expenditures, even when money was provided by voluntary donations (FGD 1 2025; FGD 2 2025). Participants in Mon State emphasized that confidence and institutional credibility were enhanced by well defined financial roles and reporting procedures (FGD 3 2025).

In addition to providing useful insights for creating fair and democratic education funding mechanisms in a future federal system, the combined interview and FGD data show that bottom-up financial control through LEBs promotes accountability and confidence in times of crises

5.4 Development of Teachers

Teachers as the Key Players in Federal Education Reform

In regions where Local Education Boards (LEBs) oversee education with assistance from Ethnic Resistance Organizations (EROs) and resistance authorities, teacher development has emerged as a top focus. Many seasoned educators joined the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) after the coup in 2021 and moved to areas governed by community-based governance structures called EROs. Their involvement has been crucial to preserving access to education, but it has also highlighted the need for organized professional assistance, particularly as more and more teaching responsibilities are taken on by community instructors and volunteers. Teaching quality varies by location as a result of these distinct groups' varying degrees of preparation and restricted access to professional development. Assessing the resilience of community-managed education in crisis situations requires an understanding of how LEBs handle these issues.

Locally based support systems for teachers have been formed by LEBs and ethnic education departments in spite of funding limitations and instability. These consist of

curriculum briefings, peer mentoring programs, short-term training sessions, and shared teaching materials. These programs support the maintenance of classroom quality, but they also highlight more significant disparities, like the lack of standardized credentials, the barriers to professional progression, and the inadequacies of monitoring and assessment systems. In order to create a cohesive framework that supports CDM teachers, volunteer educators, and displaced teaching personnel while guaranteeing consistent access to high-quality education in crisis areas, teacher development will require increased coordination among local, regional, and interim national bodies as federal education planning moves forward.

The resistance movement's educational programs also recognize teacher development as a key component of democratic reform. Teachers are important players in promoting federal education concepts, according to the Federal Democracy Education Policy of the National Unity Government (NUG) and the National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC). While acknowledging the value of teacher groups and unions as forums for professional opinion and autonomy, the policy places a strong emphasis on academic freedom, professional training, fair hiring practices, and welfare protection. According to this viewpoint, teacher empowerment is linked to both the quality of education and the more general integration of democratic principles like accountability, participation, and freedom of speech in educational governance (Federal Democracy Education Policy Draft 2021).

The significance of defending teachers' professional rights is further supported by comparative studies and international standards. Teachers' rights to job security, professional dignity, and decision-making participation are upheld by the ILO–UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers (ILO and UNESCO 1966). Teachers who are viewed as participants in governance rather than as tools of state policy are more likely to sustain reforms, according to evidence from transitional countries (Avalos 2011). In order to avoid marginalization and promote reconciliation, it is imperative that educators from resistance or alternative educational institutions be acknowledged throughout post-authoritarian transitions.

Research also highlights the importance of professional groups and teacher unions in promoting democratic governance in education. These groups frequently act as a mediator between local education boards and higher policy authorities in federal systems, encouraging shared professional standards and accountability (Bascia and Stevenson 2017). Giving educators the ability to take part in governance guarantees that the creation of policies takes ethical duty and classroom realities into account, so reaffirming education as a democratic public service.

In areas afflicted by violence, teacher safety and job security are still seriously endangered. The severe hazards faced by educators working without institutional support or security are highlighted by media stories of targeted attacks, such as the death of a teacher after an airstrike on a school in Sagaing (Myaelatt Athan 2025). The teaching workforce is experiencing widespread anxiety, displacement, and attrition as a result of these instances. Long-term insecurity impedes the hiring, training, and deployment of teachers, which leads to the loss of institutional memory and competence. Teachers are frequently left alone in the absence of organized support networks, which hinders their ability to advance professionally and reduces the general resilience and quality of education delivery.

According to research, persistent insecurity interferes with professional continuity, training, and teacher deployment. Education systems lose important human resources, as well as institutional knowledge and instructional expertise, when educators are murdered, injured, or displaced. Teachers are left alone and unsupported when professional development chances are lacking due to a lack of structured support systems. The sustainability and quality of basic education delivery are threatened by these issues.

Subnational Methods for Developing Teachers in Conflict

Policy frameworks at the state and township levels demonstrate how teacher development is being addressed in the face of institutional change and conflict. According to a Mon State Federal Education Council directive, teacher development is essential to preserving both system resilience and educational quality. Teachers are seen as being crucial to both community stability and the delivery of education, particularly those from the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM). To increase teacher capacity in challenging circumstances, the framework promotes professional standards, training programs, welfare assistance, and inclusive recruiting procedures. Fundamental democratic principles in human resource management are reflected in the teaching profession's emphasis on gender equality and nondiscrimination. Teacher development is positioned as a strategic investment for long-term federal education reform rather than a short-term crisis remedy (Mon State Federal Education Council 2023).

The Township Education Board Terms of Reference (TOR) in the Sagaing and Magway Regions recognize CDM teachers, volunteer educators, and other staff members as essential to local education services. Township Boards are in charge of overseeing teacher assignments, handling welfare issues, and granting access to professional skills, pedagogy, and psychological support training. Policies that safeguard teachers, give them official recognition, and provide them with continuous assistance demonstrate to the public that educators'

commitment, fortitude, and ability are essential to maintaining education during times of strife. According to the National Unity Government's Ministry of Education (2023), these policies link teacher development to broader democratic ideals like inclusivity, respect for professional responsibilities, and shared accountability for learning access.

One of the most comprehensive models of teacher development in a federal democratic setting is offered by Karenni State: support for teacher associations and unions strengthens independent representation and collective advocacy; the interim education policy formally recognizes teachers from ethnic systems, CDM participants, and volunteers, ensuring their professional status and job security during the transition and beyond; it pledges to improve social protections, professional respect, and opportunities for ongoing training; and it highlights the public's appreciation of teachers' resistance to authoritarianism and their role in preserving education during conflict, directly linking teacher development to democratic reconstruction and political change (Karenni State Consultative Council 2024).

Primary Data: Teachers' Actual Experiences of Insecurity and Recognition

Across all study regions, teacher development is clearly one of the weakest ties in interim education government. According to interviews, there is a serious teacher shortage brought on by relocation, persistent security risks, and inconsistent compensation. Particularly for IDP camps and online learning environments, these pressures have resulted in a significant reliance on the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) and volunteer teachers, many of whom lack formal pedagogical experience (Interview KN-01 2025; SG-01 2025; MG-01 2025). Teacher morale and retention have been negatively impacted by ambiguity regarding job status, recognition, and future employment, despite great personal dedication to keeping schools open during conflict (KN-05 2025; MG-01 2025).

Professional growth is still donor-driven and irregular, depending on informal peer mentoring, NGO workshops, and church awareness campaigns. Although participants appreciated these skill-building initiatives, they drew attention to the absence of follow-up, assessment, and curriculum-goal connections. Training initiatives are therefore scattered and yield uneven outcomes across geographical areas (SG-02 2025). The lack of integration of blended learning methodologies was a recurring theme in all of the interviews. With little coordination, online and traditional classrooms operate side by side. Karenni, Magway, and Sagaing respondents emphasized that unified blended platforms could maximize the use of limited devices and digital abilities across delivery modalities, improve teacher sharing, and promote collaboration.

In addition, teachers deal with a lot of psychological stress, low pay, and little recognition for their work. In order to compensate for the lack of formal state validation, Local Education Board (LEB) recognition became a crucial source of pride and belonging. Teacher development was presented in focus groups as a political and professional goal. Participants from Magway and Sagaing emphasized the use of peer networks, mentorship, and psychosocial support organized by LEBs to deal with displacement and instability (FGD 1 2025; FGD 2 2025). In order to ensure the longevity of the system, Mon State talks centered on professional standards, gender parity, and inclusive hiring (FGD 3 2025). Through their everyday work in the classroom, teachers' voices positioned teachers as democratic agents who spread principles of resistance, participation, and rights.

The role of teachers in education governance was also highlighted by the data. They were important voices in local policy and school management because of their frontline experience. Involving the LEB enhanced community trust, ethical oversight, and decision-making. These trends are consistent with international norms such as the ILO–UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Teachers, which maintains that democratic systems and professional respect depend on educators' ability to participate in decision-making (ILO and UNESCO 1966). In conclusion, research demonstrates that empowering LEBs enhances teacher development by combining governance engagement, psychosocial support, and recognition. This strategy not only maintains the standard of education throughout times of crises but also instills democratic values into Myanmar's federal educational framework.

5.5 Democratic State-Building, Public Involvement, and Policy Implementation

Implementing Education Policy as a Democratic Process

Frameworks for education from the resistance era frequently present the execution of policies as a transformative and participatory process rather than just an administrative one. The National Unity Government (NUG) and National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC) have developed a Federal Democracy Education Policy that clearly links education reform to public participation and the broader objectives of federal democratic transformation. The strategy, which was created through extensive talks with professionals, political players, civil society, and ethnic education groups, represents sincere community engagement in determining reform goals.

States, townships, and communities can customize policies to their unique situations while upholding fundamental federal ideals thanks to implementation's flexibility and responsiveness to local contexts. By creating education as a pillar of democratic nation-

building in Myanmar, this model satisfies public expectations that future educational institutions should rely on grassroots practices developed during resistance and transition (Federal Democracy Education Policy Draft 2021).

Subnational Methods for Putting Participatory Policies into Practice

Frameworks at the state and township levels provide specific instances of participatory implementation in action. The Township Education Board Terms of Reference (TOR) in the Sagaing and Magway Regions link community involvement and federal democratic values to the implementation of policies. Township boards are in charge of modifying national education policies to fit local circumstances while adhering to temporary federal directives. The TOR places a strong emphasis on resident consultation, working with local government bodies, and incorporating community perspectives into policy deliberations and implementation.

This reflects the general consensus that community-driven methods created in the face of opposition and conflict should be codified in Myanmar's education reforms during the transition. Thus, policy implementation is presented as a participatory process that is crucial to local democratic development rather than as bureaucratic enforcement (National Unity Government, Ministry of Education, 2023).

Through the Mon State Federal Education Council, Mon State is taking a bottom-up approach to policy creation. Local innovations, difficulties, and practical implementation realities are all captured in the regionally tailored policy. Drawing on the NUCC federal education policy and modifying it for local circumstances, it reflects community objectives and innovative approaches to maintaining education in the face of insecurity (Mon State Federal Education Council, 2023).

Implementation for Livelihoods, Social Cohesion, and Democratic Values

One of the most thorough instances of education policy implementation centered on social cohesion and democratic regeneration is Karenni State. The interim education strategy creates an adaptable, integrated framework in which human rights, peace education, ethnic histories, federal democratic ideals, and critical thinking are all incorporated into curricula at all levels. In a culture characterized by conflict, this approach views education as a direct contributor to civic consciousness, pluralism, and reconciliation.

Additionally, the policy promotes continuous evaluation procedures and student-centered teaching strategies that prioritize critical involvement over memory. In order to maintain educational continuity in the face of displacement or instability, it specifically facilitates smooth transitions between formal, non-formal, and alternative learning routes. The links between education, livelihoods, and post-conflict recovery are strengthened via technical

and vocational training that is adapted to the economic and social needs of the community. Regular policy reviews that are required guarantee flexibility in response to shifting political and social circumstances, satisfying popular calls for inclusive and responsive education reform (Karenni State Consultative Council, 2024)

Primary Data: The Democratic and Normative Transformation of Education Reform

The application of education policies in the various study regions reveals a glaring discrepancy between the declared objectives of the policies and the actual conditions on the ground. Interviewees discussed community-led initiatives in Karenni State to create educational policies through extensive discussions with educators, parents, CDM representatives, and local authorities. Although many efforts are more aspirational than practical due to a lack of resources and expertise, these inclusive approaches foster ownership and legitimacy (Interview KL-01 2025).

The Sagaing Region adopts National Unity Government (NUG) standards, especially the free education principle, and implements policies in a more top-down manner. Although it is formally forbidden to collect fees, schools frequently rely on unofficial donations to support teachers' livelihoods when there is no other source of revenue, which puts policy aspirations at odds with real-world requirements (Interview SG-02 2025).

Although they have strong policy support, inclusive principles like disability support and mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) encounter significant implementation challenges in many fields. Progress is constantly hampered by a lack of finance, educational resources, and competent teachers. In spite of federal rhetoric, participants were also concerned that new federal frameworks threaten a return to centralized authority by ignoring Local Education Boards (LEBs) in favor of higher-level councils (Interview MG-01; MG-02 2025). Focus groups and interviews both framed policy implementation as more than just technical execution but as a component of broader democratic transformation. Respondents from Magway and Sagaing demanded curriculum that prioritized ethnic histories, federal ideals, and human rights while rejecting centralized narratives as being untrue in the modern world (MG-03 2025; KN-04 2025). It was believed that developing critical thinking, civic engagement, and ethical awareness required student-centered instruction and continuous evaluation.

Focus groups supported flexible, community-driven implementation, which strengthened this viewpoint. In order to continue their education in the face of displacement and insecurity, Magway and Sagaing participants emphasized flexible learning pathways (FGD 1 2025; FGD 2 2025). While Karenni voices emphasized peace education, ethnic histories, and

civic learning as the cornerstones of social cohesion and democratic advancement, Mon State talks commended bottom-up policy formation as a source of creativity and credibility (FGD 3 2025).

When considered collectively, the data demonstrates that Local Education Boards play a crucial role in converting federal ideals into useful local initiatives. The foundation for Myanmar's inclusive federal education future is laid by empowering LEBs for participatory implementation, which turns education policy into a democratic process.

To sum up, in areas controlled by resistance authorities and ethnic resistance organizations, Local Education Boards (LEBs) play a crucial role in Myanmar's federal democratic transition, fulfilling functions that go well beyond short-term administrative duties. A clear pattern emerges from analysis of the five theme areas: in the face of political disagreement and conflict, legitimacy, adaptability, and endurance are increased through community-driven, bottom-up education governance. Decentralized LEB decision-making promotes community involvement and democratic education practices while providing context-appropriate solutions to issues including instability, displacement, language variety, and financial limitations, according to primary and secondary research. However, the data also highlights significant flaws that local initiatives cannot address on their own, including uneven funding, safety risks, and a lack of coordination. Formal LEB recognition in current and future federal legislative frameworks, clear intergovernmental connections, rights safeguards, and continuous capacity building are necessary for an effective bottom-up implementation. When taken as a whole, these results support the central claim of this action research: strengthening LEBs provides both quick fixes for preserving education during times of crisis and crucial building blocks for integrating federal democratic principles into Myanmar's post-authoritarian reconstruction

Implications for Education Policy Research

- There is evidence that Local Education Boards (LEBs) have become de facto education authorities in many areas affected by war.
- In areas where centralized systems have failed, this analysis shows that community-based education governance through LEBs successfully maintains primary schooling. This emphasizes the necessity for education policy scholarship to view such bottom-up arrangements as valid governance models rather than stopgap measures.
- The results show a clear relationship between democratic participation with institutional credibility and education governance, financing, and implementation. This suggests that policy research should look at education systems as essential components of federal democratic nation-building rather than just as service providers.
- The efficiency of federal policy frameworks depends on empirical research of local practices, as evidenced by data from resistance-administered territories, which demonstrate that effective education policy results from actual execution rather than just theoretical design.
- Decentralization and cultural responsiveness are non-negotiable concerns for education policy analysis in fragmented societies, since research demonstrates that fair access and learning quality depend on policies tailored to local security dynamics, population relocation, and language variance.
- Lastly, even in the face of extreme resource constraints, participatory accountability techniques like community monitoring and shared decision-making remain effective, indicating that education policy research should broaden its definition of accountability to include social legitimacy and trust in addition to formal compliance procedures.

6. Conclusion

The NUCC Federal Education Policy is formally recognized as a common national reference point in Mon, Karenni, Sagaing, and Magway. Local education boards and regional authorities are actively contrasting actual, bottom-up implementation experiences with federal criteria. The evaluation of regional innovations, contextual modifications, teacher placement, curriculum development, and resource management are all included in this comparative analysis.

Opportunities and difficulties in balancing the coherence of federal policy with locally driven practices are highlighted by this process. The results highlight the necessity of coordination systems that support equity, uniformity, and common democratic values in a

federalized education system while acknowledging regional uniqueness. In Myanmar's federal transition, the implementation of education policies appears as a dynamic arena where governance, equity, accountability, teacher development, and participation combine, confirming education's role as a democratic institution and public service.

In areas governed by Ethnic Resistance Organizations (EROs) and resistance forces since the 2021 military coup, this action research study shows how Local Education Boards (LEBs), working with Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) teachers, education staff, students, and young intellectuals, have become essential governance institutions sustaining primary education. Data from focus groups and interviews reveals that LEBs have taken on key governance responsibilities in the absence of official state institutions, such as curriculum adaptation, local budgeting, teacher deployment, school administration, and community coordination. Communities in Karen, Karenni, Mon, Sagaing, and Magway have been able to preserve educational continuity in the face of conflict, relocation, and administrative collapse because to these bottom-up governance techniques. The results demonstrate that education delivery in these settings is a structured, community-legitimate system based on participatory governance rather than an ad hoc charity.

The study also discovers that LEBs serve as tangible manifestations of human rights and international education commitments. As stated in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 13 of the ICESCR, children's right to education has been protected by LEBs through the active participation of CDM actors. This ensures that, in spite of state failure, children have access to free, basic education free from discrimination. According to interview and focus group discussion data, flexible learning arrangements, community-based schools, and alternative education routes are in line with SDG 4 and UNESCO's Education 2030 Framework, especially the pledges to inclusive, equitable, and high-quality education. LEBs have also helped to secure education in conflict-affected areas in accordance with international humanitarian law, such as the Geneva Conventions and UN Security Council norms on protecting schools and students during armed conflict.

When compared to traditionally centralized approaches, the results show that decentralized, bottom-up education management improves legitimacy, responsiveness, and accountability at the governance level. Participants in focus groups and interviews repeatedly underlined that decision-making at a closer level enables educational systems to better address local security, language, and cultural concerns. Nevertheless, the study also points up systemic issues, such as unequal administrative capability, irregular financial management procedures, and a lack of official legal recognition. These difficulties are similar to issues brought up in

previous research on community-managed education in conflict and post-conflict environments (Dryden-Peterson 2011; South and Lall 2018), emphasizing the need for more precise frameworks as opposed to a return to centralized authority.

The study indicates that LEBs offer a sustainable institutional foundation for education governance in a future federal Myanmar, in addition to providing temporary crisis management. Participatory decision-making, community oversight, teacher inclusion, and adaptable policy implementation are examples of governance methods that align with federal concepts of shared authority and subsidiarity. Therefore, strengthening LEBs has two purposes: it keeps education going in the current fragmented environment while also preparing institutional models that will work in a future federal democratic government.

7. Recommendations

First, Local Education Boards should be formally acknowledged as valid decentralized education governance organizations in both current and future education policy frameworks. While guaranteeing conformity with the minimal national education standards, legal and policy regulations should make clear the mandates, authorities, and duties of LEBs in the areas of school administration, curriculum modification, teacher involvement, and community participation. Formal recognition would facilitate more cohesive collaboration between EROs, resistance authorities, CDM actors, and education providers, increase accountability, and lessen governance ambiguity. The development of LEBs' governance capacity, including administrative abilities, conflict-sensitive leadership, and participatory decision-making processes, should be the top priority for donors and UN organizations.

Second, LEB-led bottom-up methods should be used to institutionalize equality and access initiatives for education. To guarantee learning continuity for displaced, conflict-affected, and underprivileged children, policies should explicitly integrate flexible education routes, community-based schools, and mother tongue-based multilingual education. These strategies are in line with international human rights duties under the ICESCR and CRC as well as international education-in-emergencies standards, and they are substantiated by the results of interviews and focus group discussions. While avoiding one-size-fits-all solutions that have historically excluded ethnic and rural populations, strengthening LEB jurisdiction over access techniques will improve inclusiveness.

Third, local governments should set up open and inclusive financial management mechanisms. Clear financial standards for LEBs, community control, public reporting, and predictable budget allocations for basic education should all be part of education finance frameworks. When possible, donor funding systems should be created to collaborate directly

with LEBs while upholding the "do no harm" and accountability standards. In addition to increasing resource efficiency, strengthening local financial control would help restore public confidence in the management of education during times of political upheaval.

Fourth, one of the main tenets of education governance change need to be the acknowledgment and advancement of teachers. In order to provide opportunities for professional growth, decision-making involvement, and social protection, policies should publicly acknowledge CDM instructors and community-based educators. Empirical research indicates that teacher participation in LEB governance structures will improve policy relevance, ethical accountability, and implementation quality. This strategy upholds education as a democratic public service rather than a means of policing and is consistent with international norms about the status of teachers.

Lastly, the application of education policy should continue to be flexible, inclusive, and conflict-aware. To guarantee responsiveness to shifting security and social conditions, LEB activities should incorporate regular review procedures, community consultation, and feedback systems. In order to prepare students for responsible engagement in a pluralistic society, educational materials should support human rights, peace, critical thinking, and federal democratic principles. Myanmar's education system may simultaneously respect international legal responsibilities, maintain learning during times of crisis, and establish the foundation for a cogent and democratic federal education system by institutionalizing bottom-up implementation through LEBs.

Policy Recommendations and Proposed Policies

First - Framework for Decentralized Governance

Formally establishing education governance in Myanmar's transitional situation requires a decentralized, community-led framework that acknowledges Local Education Boards (LEBs) as official organizations rather than temporary coordination teams. While staying in line with crucial national standards, legal and regulatory measures should explicitly define LEB jurisdiction over school operations, community involvement, curriculum modification, and local monitoring. Incorporating community forums, teacher representation, and parent involvement into LEB operations would improve public trust and democratic supervision. In order to establish LEBs as essential components of the future federal education system, international donors and UN agencies should concentrate their support on developing local governance ability, conflict-aware decision-making, and administrative independence.

Second - Financial Assistance, Teacher Support, and Inclusive Access

For democratic renewal, broad access, transparent funding, and teacher empowerment must be treated as interconnected priority in education reform. To continue education for displaced and excluded children, basic education policies should incorporate flexible learning alternatives, mother tongue-based multilingual education, and community-driven access models. To rebuild confidence in public expenditure, financing systems require transparent reporting, dependable budget commitments, and community-level oversight. In both state and non-state institutions, teachers need social protections, clear professional development pathways, governance responsibilities, and official recognition. Through these coordinated efforts, education would be transformed from a basic service into a driving force for social cohesion, democratic participation, and the development of federal institutions in Myanmar.

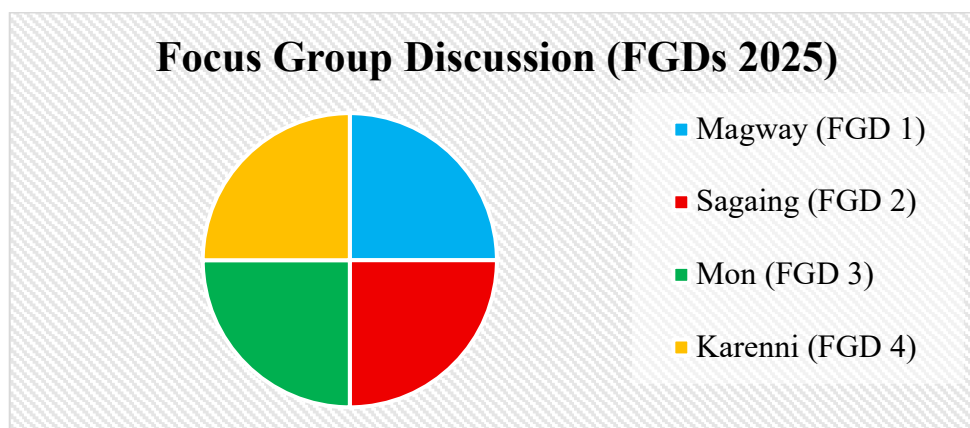
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Annex 1 List of Interviewees							
No	Date	Code No	Age	Position	Responsibility	Gender	Area
1	20 th Sep-15 th Dec, 2025	SG-01	55-65	Township Education Board (Policy) member	Teacher/Policy	Male	Sagaing
2	20 th Sep-15 th Dec, 2025	SG-02	35-45	Community-Based School Teacher, CDM Teacher	Teacher	Female	Sagaing
3	20 th Sep-15 th Dec, 2025	SG-03	30-35	Community-Based School Teacher	Teacher/ Online	Male	Sagaing
4	20 th Sep-15 th Dec, 2025	SG-04	45-55	CDM Teacher and Education Board Member	Teacher/ Finance	Male	Sagaing
5	20 th Sep-15 th Dec, 2025	SG-05	55-65	Professor of CDM (HE)	Curriculum development/ QA	Female	Sagaing
6	20 th Sep-15 th Dec, 2025	KN- 01	20-30	LEB teacher	Governance/ teacher	female	Karenni
7	20 th Sep-15 th Dec, 2025	KN- 02	35-45	A member of Interim governmnet	Finance, policy, and governance	Male	Karenni
8	20 th Sep-15 th Dec, 2025	KN- 03	20-30	University student/ teacher of BE	teacher	female	Karenni
9	20 th Sep-15 th Dec, 2025	MO-01	45-55	Interim Education Council, CDM Teacher (HE)	Governance/ QA/Curriculum Development	Male	Mon
10	20 th Sep-15 th Dec, 2025	MO-02	30-40	Interim Education Council, CDM Teacher (BE)	Teacher/ Administration	Female	Mon
11	20 th Sep-15 th Dec, 2025	MO-03	35-45	A member of Mon Federal Education Council	Governance, Policy, and Teacher	Male	Mon
12	20 th Sep-15 th Dec, 2025	MG-01	35-45	CDM Teacher, Volunteer in Community-Based School	Teacher	Female	Magway
13	20 th Sep-15 th Dec, 2025	MG-02	30-40	Interim Education Council (Finance), CDM teacher	Finance/ Governance/ Teacher	Male	Magway
14	20 th Sep-15 th Dec, 2025	MG-03	45-55	Township Education Board	Finance/ Governance	Male	Magway
15	20 th Sep-15 th Dec, 2025	MG-04	40-45	Towwnship Education Board	Administrative/ Teacher	Female	Magway
16	20 th Sep-15 th Dec, 2025	MG-05	45-55	CDM Teacher (HE), Volunteer in Community- Based School	Teacher	Male	Magway

Annex 2: Focus Group Discussion (Karenni)



Annex 3 - LEB Practices, Bottom-up Innovations, and Interim Education Frameworks in the Four Regions				
Area	Status of the Policy Document	Essential Elements	Local Adaptations and Bottom-Up Innovations	The Function of LEB in Execution
State of Karenni	Interim Education Policy for Karenni State (draft 2023, adopted /implemented 2024)	Free basic education through middle school; lifelong learning; TVET emphasis; student-centered curriculum incorporating civics, rights, and critical thinking; MTBMLE	Local teacher trainings; adaptable, community-driven curricula; and the incorporation of regional languages and cultural content	oversees local budgeting, teacher deployment, curriculum modification, and school administration.
Sagaing Region	Sagaing Federal Unit interim education in accordance with the Constitution (via Education CMT/Boards)	Programs for ethnic development at universities; self-governance regulations; integration of CDM teachers; protection of fundamental rights during airstrikes	Peer mentoring among CDM teachers; curriculum modifications tailored to certain regions; and community-based safety procedures for schools	CDM teachers are coordinated, attendance is tracked, safety and learning continuity are supported, and connections are made with ethnic education authorities
Magway Region	Interim proposals for the Magway Federal Unit (Hluttaw committees, 2024–2025)	Law courses for grades 11–12; township boards for local adaptation; resistance education during boycotts; and tripartite student-teacher-staff collaboration	Township boards overseeing customized class timetables; creative teacher-student collaboration; and curricular modifications following a coup	oversees curriculum adaptation, supports teacher deployment, oversees township-level boards, and keeps an eye on student progress.
Mon State	Mon Federal Education Council policy (advisory stage; bottom-up drafting)	Basic access through monastic or alternative schools; coordination of ethnic armed organizations; community resistance education; and alignment with federal democracy ideals	Local communities, CDM instructors, and ethnic organizations worked together to co-create the policy, which places a strong emphasis on culturally responsive education and local objectives	LEBs administer school resources, supervise teacher assignments, coordinate implementation with the Mon Federal Education Council, and match local curricula with community needs

Annex 4 Thematic Analysis Summary				
Major Theme	Sub-Code	Primary Data (Key Points)	Secondary Data (Key Points)	Analytical Summary
Governance & Structure	GS1	LEBs, parents, and instructors working together to make decisions	Decentralization is supported by federalism literature	LEBs engage in democratic governance from the ground up
Governance & Structure	GS2	Accountability is ensured through meetings, public discourse, and feedback	Decentralized governance emphasizes transparency	Accountability is founded on trust and involvement
Governance & Structure	GS3	Roles are usually defined, although they can be adjusted in an emergency	Policies suggest responsibilities for multi-level governance	Local functionality is maintained by adaptive role clarity
Access & Equity	AE1	Access is restricted by poverty, displacement, and instability	Barriers are confirmed by conflict education literature	Local answers must be adaptable to structural barriers
Access & Equity	AE2	Poor, distant, and IDP students are the most excluded	Vulnerable groups are given priority in rights-based systems	LEBs locate and assist students who are disenfranchised
Access & Equity	AE3	Waivers of fees, sharing of materials, and community assistance	Community equality is supported by inclusive education research	Equity attained via group unity
Financial Management	FM1	Dependency on gifts from the community	Informal funding is essential in conflict situations	Long-term unsustainable without federal assistance
Financial Management	FM2	Budgets give priority to materials and instructor support	Prioritization is emphasized in public finance	Budgeting pragmatically in times of crisis
Financial Management	FM3	Committees for public reporting and funding	Accountability depends on transparency	Financial trust is increased through social monitoring
Teacher Development	TD1	Volunteers and CDM fill shortages	Research on conflicts reveals teacher attrition	Risk to education sustainability from a structural perspective
Teacher Development	TD2	There is uneven availability of short-term training	CPD is crucial in delicate situations	Coordinated systems for teacher development are necessary
Teacher Development	TD3	Inspiration from dedication and respect for the community	Acknowledgment and retention	Coordination and Policy
Policy & Coordination	PC1	Insufficient knowledge of NUG policies	Weak policy dispersion in disjointed systems	LEBs serve as interpreters of policy
Policy & Coordination	PC2	Role overlaps between NUG, ERO, and LEB	A common issue during transitions is coordination	Formal coordinating methods are required
Policy & Coordination	PC3	Policies modified for the local environment	Localization is supported by decentralization	Localization is supported by decentralization

