

KAREN EDUCATION AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT

2023-2026 Strategic Plan



Background

The Karen Education and Culture Department (KECD) is a vital governing body within the Karen National Union (KNU), dedicated to advancing education and safeguarding the cultural heritage of the Karen people, an ethnic group in Burma and Thailand. Initially known as the Karen Education Department (KED), it was primarily concerned with addressing the educational needs of the Karen community during colonial and post-colonial times. Over the years, the KED broadened its vision to encompass the preservation and promotion of Karen culture and identity, leading to its transformation into the Karen Education and Culture Department. Today, the KECD is a significant education system in Southeast Burma, with a mission to provide quality education for Karen individuals across seven districts under KNU jurisdiction. This department recognizes education as a fundamental right that empowers individuals and preserves the Karen culture. It operates collaboratively, engaging with local communities, international organizations, and NGOs to create contextually relevant and effective educational initiatives. Upholding principles of social justice and self-determination, the KECD promotes equity, inclusivity, and social responsibility, fostering engaged citizens dedicated to positive change in their community. Through its community-centered approach and partnerships, the KECD strives to ensure sustainable, high-quality education for the Karen people while preserving their cultural identity in a changing world.

OUR MISSION

To develop an inclusive and complementary education system within Southeast Burma that enables learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to critically and creatively contribute to healthy, harmonious and environmentally-sustainable societies.

OUR VISION

A peaceful, pluralistic and just society founded on an educational climate that provides equal access to appropriate and quality educational services and experience for individuals and their communities to realize their full potentials, and experience and maintain their cultures.

VALUE

inclusion, equality, peace and democracy

OUR GOAL

Expanding Opportunities for Post-secondary Education

Objectives:

- (1) Increase access to post-secondary education: Provide support and resources to enable more Karen students to pursue higher education.
- (2) Enhance vocational training programs: Develop and promote vocational training initiatives to equip students with practical skills and enhance entrepreneurial spirit.
- (3) Facilitate scholarship programs: Secure scholarships and financial assistance for talented Karen students to pursue higher education both locally and internationally.
- (4) Strengthen career guidance and counseling services: Provide guidance to students and parents on available post-secondary education options and career pathways.

Enhancing Quality of Education and Capacity of Staff and Teachers

Objectives:

- (1) Improve teaching quality: Enhance the pedagogical skills and knowledge of teachers to deliver quality education to Karen students.
- (2) Develop student-centered learning approaches: Foster student engagement, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills through innovative teaching methodologies.
- (3) Provide professional development opportunities: Support the continuous professional growth of teachers through training programs, workshops, and mentorship initiatives.
- (4) Upgrade educational resources: Ensure access to modern teaching materials, textbooks, and technology to enhance the learning environment.



Communication and Advocacy Strategies

Objective

- (1) Advocate for the rights and recognition of Karen students and promote their access to quality education, preferably at accredited degree-granting institutions.
- (2) Raise awareness about the importance of education and cultural preservation among Karen communities and the wider public.
- (3) Highlight the department's initiatives, programs, achievements and students' success stories in education and cultural preservation.
- (4) Build partnerships and collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including friendly government agencies, NGOs, and international organizations.
- (5) Mobilize support and resources for the department's activities and major higher education infrastructure initiatives.

Strengthening System and Governance

Objectives:

- (1) Develop and implement education policies: Advocate for policies that address the specific needs and challenges of the Karen education system.
- (2) Enhance governance and management of educational institutions: Improve administrative systems, accountability, and transparency within schools and educational institutions.
- (3) Foster community engagement: Promote the active participation of parents, community leaders, and stakeholders in decision-making processes related to education.
- (4) Establish monitoring and evaluation mechanisms: Regularly assess the effectiveness of educational policies, programs, and initiatives for continuous improvement.