

NYAUNG SHWE - A SMALL TOWN IN FULL DEVELOPMENT

An analysis of recent past, present, and possible futures



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I hereby declare that this thesis is wholly the work of Eline Koppens. Any other contributors or sources have either been referenced in the prescribed manner or are listed in the acknowledgements together with the nature and the scope of their contribution.

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Any mistakes are my own.

Eline Koppens

Breda

PREFACE

It's the first day of March in 2015, and I have been in Nyaung Shwe for three weeks now. I am cycling around town on this humid summer day. My clothes are sticky when I arrive at the local market area. I put my bicycle away between a long lane of motorbikes and make my way to the entrance of the market. In Nyaung Shwe tourists are only allowed to drive a motorbike with a special permit, but as almost every local has a motorbike the streets are already full enough. At the market I am the point of interest of most locals doing their daily grocery shopping. Everyone is curiously looking at me when I make my way along the stalls.

I have not seen any other Western person on the market, which is not surprising as you hardly see any tourist in town during the day. Most tourists spend their day on Inle Lake and gather back in Nyaung Shwe in the afternoon when they go out for dinner. I feel a little uncomfortable with all those eyes on me, but see only curious and friendly smiles. The market is a very lively and colorful place, but also dirty and chaotic. Everyone in Nyaung Shwe is dressed traditionally, by wearing longyis and blouses. I have spotted only a few young adults wearing jeans. Most women and children are wearing thanaka on their cheeks, a yellowish cosmetic paste made from ground bark, which is a distinctive feature of the culture of Myanmar.

Nyaung Shwe's current waste collection system cannot cope with the waste production of the town, which I can notice on the streets. Most people dispose their waste themselves and the sight of small piles of burning waste is a normal street view. Most waste of the lake residents ends up in the water. Inle Lake is facing pollution problems as the high amount of boat traffic is leaking oil from its motor blocks and the farmers using chemical pesticides on the floating gardens. The view of the hills surrounding the lake is a little blurry due to air pollution but still very beautiful. The lake is huge and impressive enough to not be bothered by all the other tourist boats around.

This thesis is written for the study program International Tourism Management and Consultancy, with the specialization of sustainable tourism. When I got the opportunity to go to Nyaung Shwe to participate in a research project, I have decided to link my thesis with this town, which operates as the service town of the popular tourism attraction Inle Lake.

Doing research in a beautiful and still very authentic place as Nyaung Shwe has been a rewarding experience. The two months that I have spent there with both locals and fellow students have helped me to understand and learn about the role and challenges this town faces within the tourism industry. I have gained a much better understanding of Myanmar and Nyaung Shwe, and I feel very fortunate to have visited the country in an early stage of development.

I hope that the results of this thesis will be interesting and helpful for participants and officials involved in the tourism industry and development of Nyaung Shwe.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Myanmar's still relatively recently introduced tourism industry is developing rapidly. When I got the opportunity to cooperate in a development organization's research project in Nyaung Shwe, the service town of one of the most popular tourism attraction of Myanmar, I decided to conduct my thesis research in the same place. Tourism can have damageable impacts to destinations without proper coordination or management, and Nyaung Shwe has been rapidly changing to cope with the tourism demand.

The objective of this thesis research is to describe recent changes of Nyaung Shwe and its current developments towards tourism, as well as the representations of possible future operating environments. To come to this result, three research questions have been formulated as following:

- 1. How has tourism developed in Nyaung Shwe?**
- 2. How has Nyaung Shwe changed and which major problems are occurring?**
- 3. What are possible future operating environments for Nyaung Shwe?**

The answers on question 1 and 2 serve as input for the scenarios for question 3. Most of the data has been collected via primary research on location, which has been complimented with secondary research findings. The primary research consisted of structured interviews, a focus group, informal conversations, and participant observations, which was conducted in February and March 2015. Firstly, interviews have taken place with local inhabitants of Nyaung Shwe, to gather all relevant information towards recent changes as well as driving forces for future change. Out of all the results of the interviews, informal conversations and observations, the input for a focus group has been selected. The aim of the focus group was to identify the two main factors serving as driving forces for future change. These factors have formed the basis of the scenario narratives describing Nyaung Shwe's tourism market in 2025, ten years from now. Theories have been integrated to support the analysis and application of the collected data, including a Destination Lifecycle theory (Butler, 1980) that discusses phases of development, and the Driving Forces method (Moriarty, 2012) related to scenario analysis. A vital support within my research was the Destination Management Plan (DMP) of the Inle Lake Region, which confirmed and supplemented my primary data results.

The major driving forces for future change in Nyaung Shwe, are the increase in tourism numbers visiting the region and the environmental problems facing Inle Lake. The tourism market of the region is depending on this natural heritage, however it are the tourism activities that cause many of the problems. Nyaung Shwe's tourism development is taking place on the assumption that tourism to the region will keep increasing, but if Inle Lake will lose its glory this might not be the case.

Recommendations have been formulated out of the scenario analysis and overall findings. An important first step is the development of an overall organization of different representatives from important tourism players that will work together on the implementations of strategies and actions. The local government has to set and monitor regulations to put a stop on the exploitation of Inle Lake, by for example determine a carrying capacity of tourist boats operating on the lake. Furthermore, educational programs have to be developed, with the support of international NGOs, towards awareness creation among local inhabitants of the value of a healthy lake environment for their future livelihoods. Lastly, tourists should be made aware of their impacts on the region and be advised how to limit their impacts by for example sharing boats to visit the lake.

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

Nyaung Shwe, as part of the Inle Lake Region, is in full development and has become a tourism-dependent town as for being the service town of the popular tourism destination Inle Lake. The Inle Lake Region is located in Southern Shan State in Myanmar and is home to over 1.4 million people from different backgrounds and cultures (DMP, 2014).

I have had the chance to work and live in Nyaung Shwe for two months, as I cooperated in a project commissioned by The German Federal Enterprise for International Cooperation (GIZ). GIZ currently implements several programs in Myanmar that focus on strengthening the private sector, developing the financial sector and promoting vocational training (GIZ, 2014). In Shan State, GIZ focusses on sustainable economic development by supporting the business environment of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs). The project I was involved in aims for better community involvement in the hotel sector of the Inle Lake Region. Thanks to this project, I had the privilege to cooperate with the local tourism development organization Inle Speaks via whom I gained a lot of relevant information for my individual research. I worked together with locals and got the help of a local translator during the full time period I was working in town.

This thesis is the report of my research of Nyaung Shwe's recent developments, major problems, and description of possible future operating environments presented in the form of scenarios. Besides desk research, mainly the outcomes of structured interviews conducted with local inhabitant have provided the information of recent changes as well as future predictions towards possible developments of the town. Scenario narratives are written to describe four different operating environments of Nyaung Shwe in 2025, ten years from now. Informal conversations and participant observations have completed the research results. All findings are discussed and recommendations are given to conclude the research.

1.1 Background Analysis

Myanmar, also still known as Burma, is a relatively new tourism destination within Southeast Asia. The country, with a population of 54.17 million (MOHT, 2013), was in an international isolation for 49 years. From 1962 to 2011, the country was ruled by a military junta that held absolute power. The first general election in 20 years was held in 2010 and was an important step for the change from military rule to a civilian democracy. New elections coming up in November this year.

Burmese is the official language, however a large number of dialects are spoken due to the 135 ethnic groups of the country. The biggest ethnic groups are the Burmese (68%), Shan (9%), and Karen (7%) (Kelly, 2014). Since the transfer of power from the military to a civil government in 2011, the country slowly opened its borders for tourists and is now rapidly increasing in popularity within the tourism industry. Due to its long isolation, the country remains a mysterious destination which attracts visitors from all over the world. In 2014, an estimated three million travelers have visited Myanmar, according to the government's Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. This is a 50% rise on the two million who entered the country in 2013, and a triple of the one million who visited in 2012 (Myanmar Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, 2014). Tourism is growing rapidly since 2012, which was a key year as the total arrival number was over 1 million for the first time in Myanmar's history.

Figure 1 International Visitors by Entry Point, 2008 - 2013

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Yangon	187.766	234.417	297.246	364.743	559.610	817.699	1.022.081
Mandalay	5.553	8.861	13.442	20.912	32.521	69.596	90.011
Nay Pyi Taw	0	0	0	5.521	1.250	11.842	19.261
Land Borders	537.911	519.269	475.877	425.193	465.614	1.144.146	1.949.788
Mawlamyine	0	0	0	0	0	1.024	207
Total	731.230	762.547	786.565	816.369	1.058.995	2.044.307	3.081.412

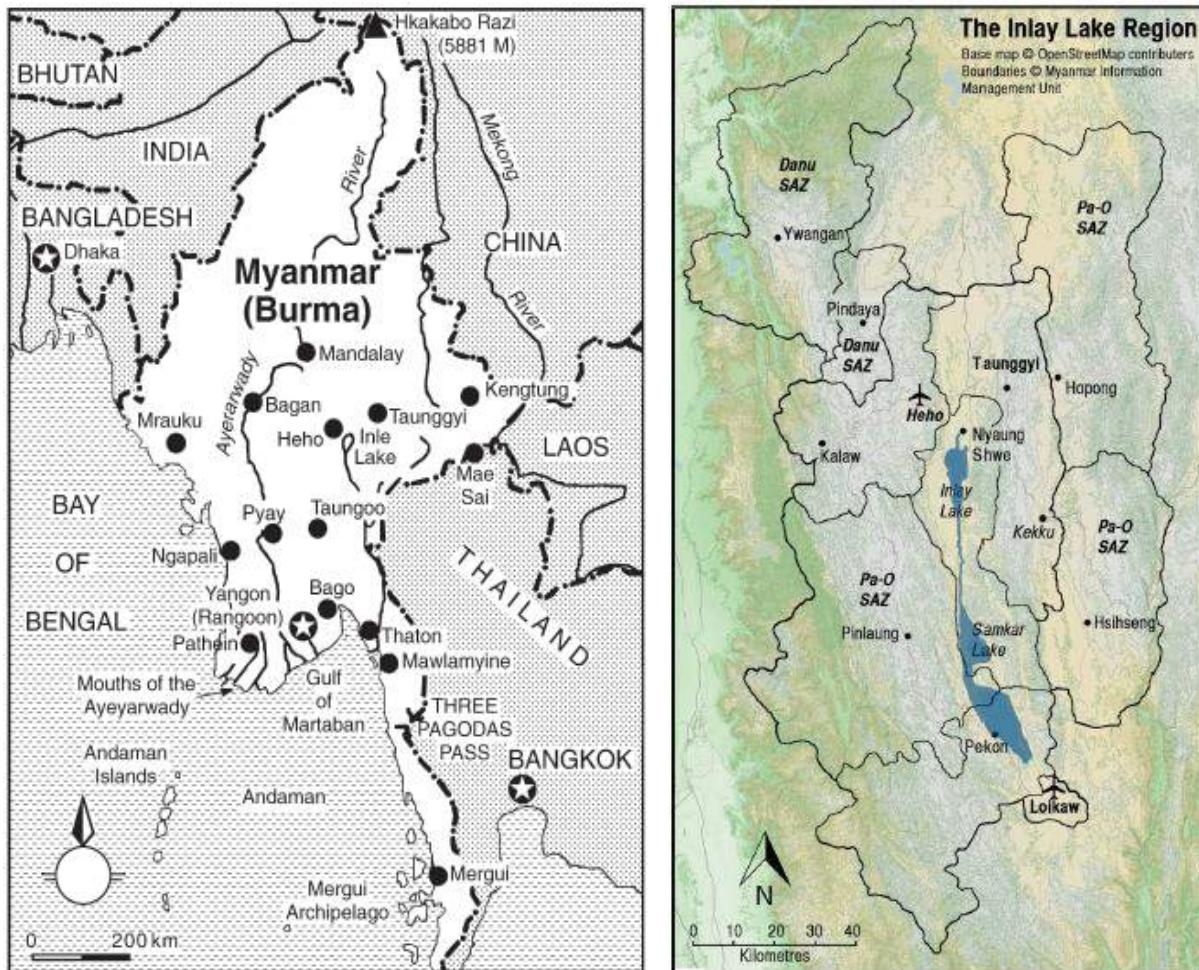
(Myanmar Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, 2014)

The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar is transforming its political and economic system to enhance economic growth, reduce poverty and increase the living standards of Myanmar's population (MOHT, 2013). The Tourism Master Plan of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism (MOHT) has been completed in June 2013, and presents a strategic plan towards the tourism development of Myanmar until 2020. The goal of the Master Plan is to maximize the contribution of tourism to national employment and income generation, and ensure that the social and economic benefits of tourism are distributed equally. The Master Plan has set a high target of 7.48 million international visitors in 2020. Their vision is described as:

"We intend to use tourism to make Myanmar a better place to live in—to provide more employment and greater business opportunities for all our people, to contribute to the conservation of our natural and cultural heritage and to share with us our rich cultural diversity" (MOHT, 2013, p. i).

Currently, international tourism is largely confined to a central band of Myanmar, with almost no visitation in the far north and south of the country. The majority of international tourists visit the country's four main destinations, namely the cities Yangon, Mandalay and Bagan, and Inle Lake. Yangon was the former capital of Myanmar, until November 2005 when Nay Pyi Daw became the new capital of the country. With a population of over 5 million people, Yangon remains the largest and most commercially important city and is the primary entry point for international visitors. (Kelly, 2014).

Figure 2 Map of Myanmar and The Inle Lake Region



(Jassby, 2000)

(DMP, 2014)

Mandalay is Myanmar's second largest city and is the economic and religious hub of upper Myanmar. The city is known for its cultural diversity. Bagan is an area in the central region of Myanmar. The city is located on the banks of the Ayeyarwady River and is home to the largest concentration of redbrick Buddhist temples, pagodas, stupas and ruins in the world with many dating from the 11th and 12th centuries (Kelly, 2014).

Inle Lake is the second largest lake in the middle of Myanmar, south-east of Mandalay. The lake is 22km long, where stilted lakeside villages and the surrounding hills house more than 120.000 people (Jassby, 2000), including different ethnic groups. The Intha people mainly live on the lake and the Pa-O people in the surrounding area. On the lake farmers grow vegetables on floating gardens and fish on wooden gondolas using a special, one-legged rowing technique.

1.2 Problem Analysis

Myanmar is experiencing rapid growth in tourist arrivals and tourism receipts, and is becoming an emerging tourist destination for international travelers (MOHT, 2013). Nyaung Shwe is the main tourism hub and service town of the region of Inle Lake, and plays an important role in the tourism industry of Myanmar. As shown in Figure 1 in the background analysis, the country is receiving more tourists every year and is developing rapidly to cope with the tourist demands. According to the statistics of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism (MOHT), the amount of official hotel rooms have doubled between 2010 and 2014. Tourism is one of the world's most significant sources of economic outcomes and employment. However, it is a very complex industry involving numerous stakeholders, with sometimes opposite interests, and requiring significant amounts of resources. Therefore, tourism can have very opposite effects according to the way activities are managed. Managed well, tourism can play a positive role in the socio, cultural, economic, environmental and political development of a destination and as such represents a significant development opportunity for many countries and communities. On the contrary, unchecked tourism development can lead to very damageable impacts (UNEP-WTO, 2005). Every year, more people are coming to the region to find a job in the tourism industry. According to the interviewees, many local inhabitants are trading their farmer work for a service related job within the increasing tourism market and others sell their land to rich investors. When development continues in an uncontrolled way, the destination will lose all its authenticity with which it attracted tourists in the first place. "Destination areas carry with them the potential seeds of their own destruction, as they allow themselves to become more commercialized and lose their qualities which originally attracted tourists" (Plog, 1974, p.58).

According to the SWOT analysis of the region's DMP (2014), the main threats of the Inle Lake Region are negative environmental and socio-cultural impacts of tourism. The environment in Nyaung Shwe and around Inle Lake is suffering from pollution, and the local residents are missing the education and awareness to protect and preserve their nature. Inle Lake is attracting the tourists to Nyaung Shwe and at the moment this natural resource is being exploited. The water level is decreasing ever year and the lake is very polluted by oil leaking boats and chemical pesticides used on the floating gardens. In fact, the lake could possibly "become an ecological catastrophe" (DMP, 2014, p. 53). Deforestation occurs in the region to make way for new tourism facilities and, as Nyaung Shwe is becoming more important, more roads and connections are being built (DMP, 2014). Resources are being exploit and businesses are operating without much strategy or support.

The MOHT acknowledges the environmental threats to the lake area and the importance of a healthy environment for the local tourism economy. It has therefor included a separate strategy on environmental management in its DMP (MOHT, 2014). Nevertheless, the rapid developments in Nyaung Shwe and around the lake pose an uncertain future for the town.

As mentioned in the background analysis, Myanmar was in an isolation for almost 50 years, and therefore not much research has been done in the country. Nyaung Shwe has the potential to grow fast, within an even faster growing market, and therefore it is of importance to be prepared and try to prevent bad scenarios from happening. Acknowledging the threats identified and the strategies suggested to prevent them in the DMP, but also taking into account the current uncontrolled developments, this thesis will discuss possible future scenarios, developed from the analysis of recent changes of the town, which can help important players in the tourism industry.

1.2 Research Objective and Questions

The aim of this thesis is to analyze recent changes in Nyaung Shwe, how the current tourism market is developing, and to discuss possible future scenarios. As indicated in the problem analysis, there is not much known about the change that Nyaung Shwe is facing due to the rapid tourism development and its consequences that might become problematic in the further future. Therefore, three research questions have been formulated to help as a guideline through the research of Nyaung Shwe's tourism development, issues occurring and possible future environments. The research questions are formulated as following:

- 1. How has tourism developed in Nyaung Shwe?**
- 2. How has Nyaung Shwe changed and which major problems are occurring?**
- 3. What are possible future operating environments for Nyaung Shwe?**

The answers on question 1 and 2 will serve as input for the scenarios in question 3.

1.4 Thesis Structure

Within this thesis, first a background analysis is presented to give a better understanding of the context of the research area as well as to define the research questions forming the research. The second chapter is the methodology chapter, where the methods used to collect information for every research question are explained. All the results are discussed in the third chapter, divided into literature, observations and interview results. This information is used in the formulation of four possible future scenarios that are presented in chapter four of this report. The last part, chapter five, includes a discussion, conclusion and possible recommendations for tourism stakeholders and governmental parties.

Theories about destination development and a lifecycle model have been integrated in background analysis, to support as an evaluation tool for past developments of Nyaung Shwe. Furthermore, scenario theories have been implemented in the research and have helped to come to the formulation of different future operating environments in chapter four.

CHAPTER 2 – METHODOLOGY

2.1 Desk Research and Interviews

The information related to the first research question, which focusses on the development of tourism in Nyaung Shwe, is mainly found in literature and completed with results of the interviews conducted. Most literature is found on the internet and in official reports of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, including last year's DMP of the Inle Lake Region. The DMP (2014) has served as the main support for my primary research data. Furthermore, I have used international news articles and information from Myanmar tourism stakeholder websites, as their information offered the most recent data. Besides websites, I have found some useful academic reports and journal articles via the NHTV database. The theories implemented in the background and scenario analysis originate from these articles and are included to support my research. An overview of the used sources can be found in the references, in chapter 6 of this report.

The second research question could not be answered with desk research and therefore a structured interview has been developed to investigate Nyaung Shwe's recent changes and issues. With a structured interview technique, standardized questions are asked to all interviewees in the same order (Saunders, 2009). There has been chosen for a structured interview technique to collect valuable data towards selected matters. This thesis is partly a prediction research, which aims to predict future events or outcomes based on patterns within a set of variables. These variables were the outcome of the interviews and future events are described in scenario narratives.

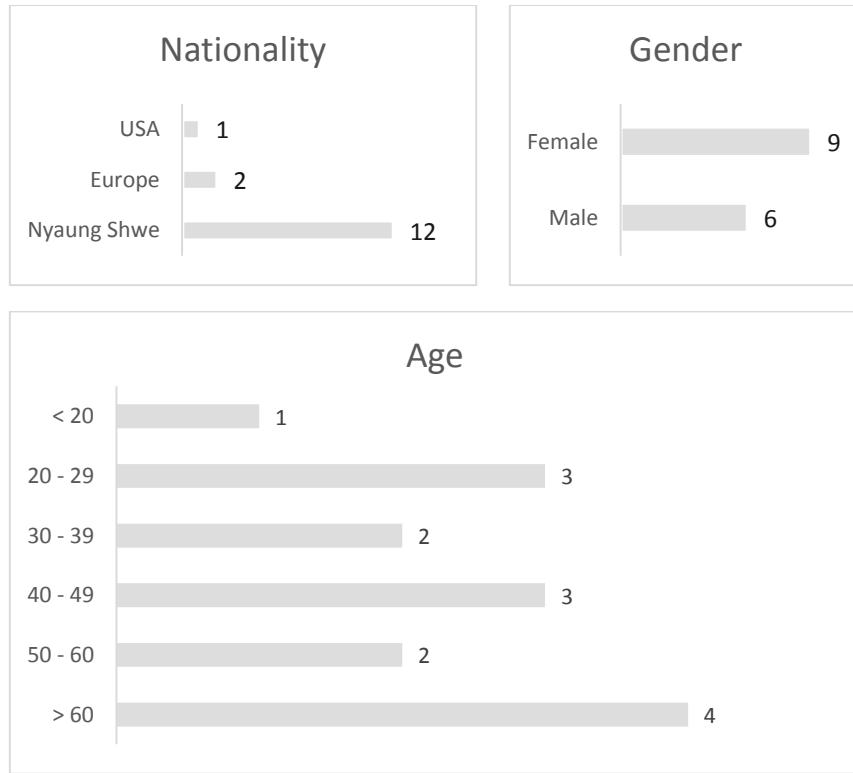
Before departure, an interview template has been designed. Two questions were formulated to obtain specific information about recent changes in Nyaung Shwe due to tourism development and a last question was used to obtain information about the perspective of local residents on their view of the future of Nyaung Shwe. The first question of the structured interview is "What has changed in Nyaung Shwe?" and refers to the development that occurred in the past 5 to 10 years. The findings have been used in the results of the second research question that investigates changes as well as occurring problems in town. To try to understand why changes and issues have developed the second question follows up with "What is causing that change?". The third structured question "What will happen in the future?" was included to ask about future views and opinions of residents on the development of Nyaung Shwe within ten years from now. During my research period in Nyaung Shwe in February and March 2015, I have conducted 15 structured interviews. The interview template can be found in appendix 7.1.

A sample group has been selected to form a representation of Nyaung Shwe's population. 12 Out of 15 participants were from Nyaung Shwe and have been living and working in town for at least ten years. People with all different occupations have been approached, in order to obtain a broader perspective. Some participants are working with or for tourists and others are not related with the tourism industry. For example, I have interviewed a regional tour guide, hotel manager and restaurant owner which are all daily working with tourists, but also approached a school teacher, shop owner and monk to get the perspective of residents that do not directly get in contact with tourists. The interviews with the people without a relation with tourists had to be conducted with the help of a translator. All participants are personally approached and asked for their participation. For some interviews I had to make an appointment for another day, a small number refused to participate, but most of the times I could conduct the interview right after an informal introduction. Even though I wanted to interview

only locals as they are the experts on the matter and I wanted to find out their opinion of the changes tourism brought to town and was curious about their future expectations, I got the chance to interview two Western people that lived and worked in Nyaung Shwe for over 20 years and one tourist that, a cultural anthropologist, who often revisit the town and know the place also from before the country opened its borders to all international tourists. Their input brought some perspective in the findings as their opinions are influenced by their cultural background and Western view on things. Interviews with the executive officer of Partnership For Change and the director of Inle Speaks have finalized my interview data with some interesting new input. The overall sample group includes participants from all different ages and only slightly more women than men. An overview of participant information can be found in Figure 3.

All interviews have been conducted personally. I introduced every question with a brief explanation and transcribing the answers right away. After every interview, I directly reviewed and complimented my notes. In some cases, informal conversations, at different times, have complimented the interview results. The interview transcripts can be found in appendix 7.2.

Figure 3 Overview Participant Specifications



Besides the structured interviews, participant observations has taken place during my research period. This is where “the researcher attempts to participate fully in the lives and activities of subjects and thus becomes a member of their group, organization or community. This enables researchers to share their experiences by not merely observing what is happening but also feeling it” (Gill and Johnson, 2002:144, retrieved from Saunders, 2009).

When I was living in Nyaung Shwe, I got a lot of contact with local residents and by observing the people’s day to day activities and routines I learned a lot about cultural traditions and by comparing the different behavior of local residents I could see changing occurring.

2.2 Focus Group and Scenarios

After the interview results were analyzed, a focus group has taken place with four of the interviewees: Sai Win, the director of Inle Speaks, Swe, the owner of Thanakha Garden Restaurant, Thomas who works as a regional tour guide, and Sue, the owner of the Bamboo Cooking Class. The participants have been selected out of the sample group due to their role in the tourism market of Nyaung Shwe, as well as their knowledge and strong opinion about the changes and issues that the town is facing. All participants are involved in the tourism industry and are all four local residents of Nyaung Shwe. The focus group took place on the 26th of March and lasted 3 hours. The meeting had a clear structure, and a slightly informal atmosphere. The aim of the meeting was to identify the two main factors serving as driving forces for future change towards the tourism industry of Nyaung Shwe. These forces have to be identified to serve as the basis for the scenario analysis. Most input for the identification of the driving forces was retrieved from the SWOT analysis of the DMP of the Inle Lake Region (2014) and supplemented with the results of the structured interviews.

During the focus group all participants were asked to individually rank the presented driving forces in order of importance (most important is 1, and least important is 6) and explain why every factor got this ranking. I did this to provide every participant with input for a group discussion. An overall ranking had to be done to identify the two main driving forces that would be used in the scenario analysis. If I would not have asked all participants to give their own ranking before the group discussion, everyone would right away agree with each other, out of politeness or shyness. Now a little discussion occurred due to different individual opinions, before everyone agreed upon the end results.

To identify possible future operating environments for Nyaung Shwe, scenario analysis was used. Predicting the future is complex, especially in the long term. Kahn, Wiener, and Bell (1967, retrieved from Moriarty, 2012) define a scenario as “a hypothetical sequence of events constructed for the purpose of focusing attention on causal processes and decision points”. In their most common form, scenarios are possible representations of future states of affairs (Moriarty, 2012). There are broad views on the nature of scenario analysis, whereas some consider it more as a subjective art form and others as a theoretical construction. Scenario analysis seeks sustainability by proposing hypothetical future environments that can be tested under different evolutionary pressures. The underlying reason for scenario analysis is to pursue improvements or opportunities that might enhance survival.

Scenario analysis is not often used in the tourism industry, however it can be helpful for stakeholders to prepare or prevent for different future situations. VisitScotland, the national tourism agency of Scotland, used a scenario-planning process to untangle the complexity of the forthcoming war in Iraq (Yeoman, 2005). The scenarios explored the impact of such a war on tourism against a backdrop of a failing economic environment towards GDP and equity markets. In 2003, Scotland was on the edge of a recession, and VisitScotland wanted to know how war would affect this economic environment and how this would affect different tourism markets. They have constructed four scenarios which helped the organization develop policies and actions to deal with contingencies in each scenario (Yeoman, 2005).

There are different methods that can be used in scenario analysis, but for this thesis the Driving Forces method is used (Goodwin & Wright, 2004, retrieved from Moriarty, 2012). This approach depends on the degree of uncertainty of important forces influencing a future operating environment. Clusters of forces positioned within a two by two impact matrix provide the basis for scenario narratives

describing possible future operating environments. The issue of concern and horizon year have to be defined for which elements are identified and clustered into the categories of predictability and impact. Underlying driving forces need to be searched that link uncertainties within the clusters and prioritizes these by the level of impact. The scenarios are formulated out of the two main driving forces. The created storyline for each scenario have to include coherence between all factors for change with the selected driving forces (Moriarty, 2012).

The scenarios presented in chapter four are written according to the Driving Forces Method, thus, an impact matrix illustrates the basis of the different scenarios. The two main driving forces for change have been placed in this matrix. Both forces have either a positive or negative development, and form in this way four different environments. The matrix is build up as following:

Figure 4 Template Scenario Impact Matrix

Scenario 1		Scenario 2	
A +	A -	B +	B -
Scenario 3		Scenario 4	
A +	A -	B +	B -
B -		B -	

The driving forces have been identified out of the DMP of the lake region and the interview results. The two main forces of change have been chosen within a focus group. The scenarios will describe different operating environments of Nyaung Shwe in 2025, 10 years from now. The initial focus point was for five years, but has been set to 2025 as most interviewees advised me to focus on a later period of time and within the group discussion in the focus group we have agreed upon 2025 as horizon year for the scenarios.

2.3 Limitations

To gather information about a small town in a country that has just recently been released from isolation was challenging. Even though Nyaung Shwe plays a big role in the shadows of Inle Lake within the national tourism market, limited information was available. Due to the fact that tourism was not really a market in Myanmar the past five decades, almost no research has been conducted up until now. Therefore, most information forming this thesis is from primary sources, taken from the results of structured interviews, informal conversations and observations, and could be minimally supported with official or academic sources.

There has to be considered that Myanmar's population has been ruled in dictatorship for decades so might still be influenced and therefore might not (yet) be willing to share in depth information with outsiders. Moreover, most interviews have been conducted in English, and therefore a language barrier has to be taken into account. Three interviews have been conducted with a translator and miscommunications that could have happened on either parties have to be taken into account.

Other limitations are the subjective views of the future of Nyaung Shwe which could only be supplemented by the DMP of the Inle Lake Region, and no other official or academic source.

Even though I have used a structured interview technique, which is part of the survey strategy (Saunders, 2009), I could not conduct the structured questions as a survey, because a lot of interaction was necessary to collect relevant data. I choose the collecting of qualitative data over quantity and therefore took the time for every interview. When conducting the interviews I encountered some difficulties. Firstly, the second question about “what is causing the change” was unclear for most participants. No one understood the question at first, and with the explanation I had to be careful not to influence their answer. I have encountered that when you give an example the participants always agree upon it and use this in their answers. Most of the participants were shy and it was hard to get a lot of information out of them. Secondly, the third question also brought some difficulties. During the interviews I found out that asking questions about future scenarios was challenging for the local participants to answer. I could notice that the people do not have a long term vision as it was difficult to let them imagine how the future would look like. Thirdly, after already ten interviews I did not really collect any new data as most participants were pointing out the same changes and developments. I have tried to gain more information by approaching more people that were not directly related to the tourism industry, however still barely any new information could be collected, and therefore have finalized my primary research after 15 interviews.

CHAPTER 3 – RESULTS

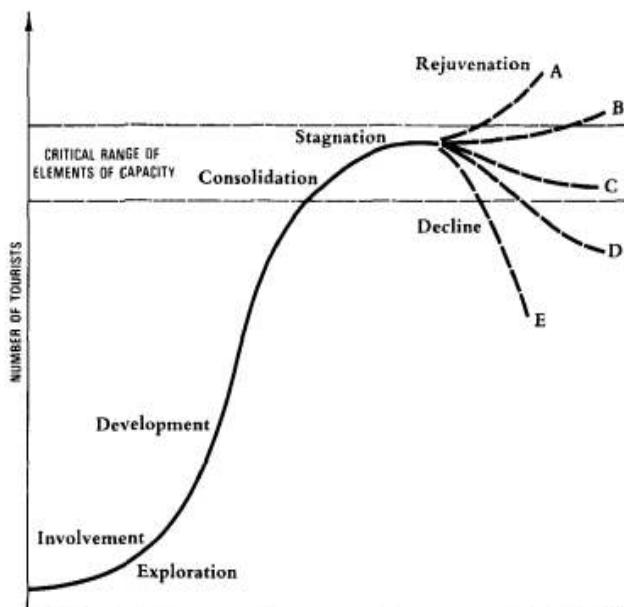
3.1 Literature

International tourism activities in Inle Lake started in the early 1970s when the first trips were organized. Back then most visitors stayed overnight in Taunggyi because of the lack of tourism infrastructure in the area. An increase in tourism facilities and infrastructure development began after 1996, where the first accommodation was constructed on the lake, and guesthouses opened in Nyaung Shwe (DMP, 2014). Nowadays, Nyaung Shwe, as part of the Inle Lake Region, is one of Myanmar's four flagship tourism destinations and the most important combined cultural and natural heritage tourism area. It is home to a diverse range of ethnic minorities, whom maintain traditional ways of life, as well as being an important area of biodiversity providing vital livelihoods and income for local, regional and national economies (DMP, 2014).

Nyaung Shwe is part of the Inle Lake Region and is the service town and central point for visitation of the wider region. Nyaung Shwe is attracting both international and domestic tourists with the numerous facilities it offers, including boat services to the most popular tourism attraction Inle Lake. The town itself has some interesting architecture, and history to tell. The 1221 hotel rooms and 52 restaurants recorded in Nyaung Shwe in 2010, are due to the rapid development to cope with the demand already overreached (DMP, 2014).

The first tourists coming to see Inle Lake where staying in Taunggyi, the capital of Shan State. When the first hotel was opened in 1990, tourists slowly started to discover Nyaung Shwe. The concept of a tourism cycle of evolution is explained by Butler (1980) in six stages of development of a tourism destination. In his model the stages of exploration, involvement, development and consolidation lead to both stagnation and decline or to stagnation followed by rejuvenation. The first phase of the

Figure 5 Hypothetical Evolution of a Tourist Area



lifecycle start with a small number of visitors coming to an area, restricted by lack of infrastructure, facilities and local knowledge. The development of secondary tourist facilities will lead to the involvement stage. Now, visitor number increase, awareness grows and pressure develops for governments to improve transport for tourists. the area's popularity will grow rapidly and marketing will define tourist seasons, which might lead to a development stage. Natural and cultural attractions will be defined and developed, and external organizations will provide secondary attractions. The market might grow to such an extend that local inhabitants start to disapprove the physical change that occurs in the area.

The exploration stage of Butler's Lifecycle Model (1980) started in Nyaug Shwe when the adventurous backpack travelers came to town to use it as an overnight base for their visit to

Inle Lake (DMP, 2014). In this stage, tourism had no economic or social significance to the local residents. Over time more visitors came to town. As Nyaunghswe grew in popularity it got into the involvement stage. The national as well as regional government started improvements towards transport and infrastructure for tourists and further involved themselves by setting regulations and assigning restricted hotel zones. Furthermore, the increase in tourism facilities like hotels, restaurants and tour and travel agencies appeared as the local residents got aware of the economic opportunities the upcoming industry was bringing. The number of boats going back and forth between Nyaung Shwe and Inle Lake increased rapidly as well as construction sides in town to facilitate the rising number of visitors with accommodation.

Currently, Nyaung Shwe is in its development stage. Full involvement of national and regional government has taken place, as well as local residents opening stores, restaurant and hotel facilities to economically benefit from the rising number of tourists coming to town.

A destination comes in its consolidation stage as the area's economy is dependent on tourism. Major franchises and tourism chains will be presented and marketing will be far reaching. Eventually, stagnation occurs when visitor numbers come to a peak and levels of carrying capacity are reached. After reaching stagnation, Butler saw that rejuvenation or decline as possible alternatives which he describes in the following five scenarios:

Figure 6 Butlers Five Scenarios after Stagnation

-
- A Successful redevelopment leads to renewed growth
 - B Minor modifications to capacity levels lead to modest growth in tourism
 - C Tourism is stabilized by cutting capacity levels
 - D Continued overuse of resources and lack of investment leads to decline
 - E War, disease or other catastrophe causes an immediate collapse in tourism
-

(Butler, 1980)

According to Cooper and Jackson (1989, retrieved from Getz, 1992), the life-cycle model cannot be used as a tool for forecasting. It cannot predict how a destination is going to develop and should not be used to analyze future developments. It is a model that describes and analyzes past development and can give an indication towards the current position of a destination.

To understand why places rise and fall in popularity as a tourism destination it is necessary to involve the psychology of the people who travel. Plog (1974) has developed a population curve of psychographic groups, to describes different types of people according to their travel behavior and desire, including the Psychocentrics and Allocentrics. Psychocentrics are people that prefer familiar destinations, with sun and fun sports, where they can do commonplace activities. They look for good infrastructure and transportation, luxurious facilities and hospital services. Psychocentrics look for well developed tourist facilities as they can find destinations confronting. Their actions are structured and they are more likely to restrict their movements to areas clearly marked as being tourist friendly. In extreme cases, they may not leave the safety of a resort or hotel, unless accompanied by a guide (Cohen, 1979). Allocentrics, on the other hand, prefer non-touristy areas where they can explore new and different destinations before introduced to the mass. They want to get involved in the daily life activities, enjoy meeting and dealing with people from a foreign culture and have a high activity level (Plog, 1974). Furthermore, these type of travelers embrace the strangeness of a destination, explore it widely, and travel independently (Cohen, 1979).

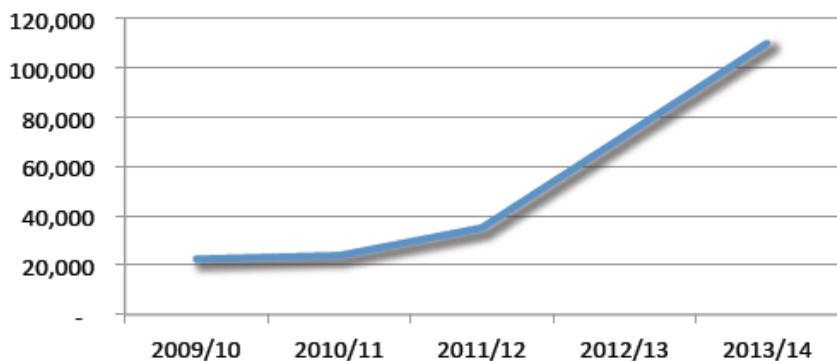
Nyaung Shwe has had tourism activity before the country opened its borders for all international visitors. Back then it was very complicated and time consuming to apply for a visa, which asks for a high motivation level from tourists who want to go to Myanmar. These people wanted to explore an unknown country, and had to be very prepared and informed about cultural as well as practical matters. Nowadays, everyone can easily get a visa and therefore different type of people are starting to visit the country. More facilities are developing, tours and travel packages are offered, familiar products are being imported into the country, and travel guides are leading tourists to all the popular tourism destinations. It is not necessary anymore to come prepared and many people are unaware of cultural etiquettes.

3.1.1 VISITOR PROFILE

Statistics of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism show that in 2013, 70% of the incoming tourists to Myanmar came from Asia (Myanmar Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, 2014). There were around 130,000 arrivals from Western Europe, dominated by French, British and Germans. The highest number of non-Asian arrivals, however, came from the USA, with over 37,000 visitors (Simpson, 2013). Other findings confirm this by stating that from the 2.04 million inbound visits in 2013, 1.14 million arrivals came via land borders (mostly via the Thailand-Myanmar border, however package tours with arranged visas can arrive via the India-Myanmar and China-Myanmar borders). Around 818,000 visitors arrived in the country via Yangon, 70,000 via Mandalay and almost 12,000 visitors entered via Nay Pyi Taw (Kelly, 2014).

The result of a survey conducted during the compilation of the Myanmar Tourism Master Plan (2013) shown that most respondents were older than 35 years of age (70%) and university-educated (78%). Most were travelling independently (67%), either alone or in small groups. The average length of stay was 13.8 nights for European travelers, and 6.3 nights for Asian visitors (DMP, 2014).

Figure 7 Growth in International Arrivals to the Inle Lake Region, 2009 - 2014



(DMP, 2014)

International tourism in the Inle Lake Region is growing, whereas sources predicting a doubling of arrivals by 2016. However, Myanmar is opening up and tourism will most likely shift from the four main destinations to a more spread out visitation countrywide. Each destination within the country will to some extent compete as well as complement each other.

The main purpose for visiting Myanmar by international visitors is for leisure tourism. The biggest group is represented by free independent travelers which generally refers to people over 35, of above

average income, and who like to travel in small groups or as couples. They avoid mass tourism and the holiday package of traditional travel operators, and favor a more individualistic approach to travel. According to the statistics the package tours has declined in the past three years, but are becoming more popular again. The amount of people traveling for business purposes has been relatively stable in the past four years.

Figure 8 Main Purpose for Visiting Myanmar by International Visitors, 2011 - 2014

	2011 (% of total arrivals)	2012	2013	2014
Package tours	26	23	17	22
FITs	38	42	38	30
Business travellers	21	20	19	19
Social visitors	n/a	n/a	5	4
Others	15	15	21	25

Note: n/a = not available, FITs = free independent travelers

(Myanmar Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, 2014)

3.1.2 TOURISM DISTRIBUTION

International tourism is based mostly around four destinations described in the background analysis; Yangon, Mandalay, Bagan and Inle Lake. As of 2013, 95% of arrivals by air visited Yangon, 53% visited Mandalay, 28% visited Bagan, and 17% visited Inle Lake. Other destinations were less than 5% (DMP, 2014).

Even though less data can be found on domestic tourism, it is clear that the domestic market is growing rapidly as well. Most of the market is based around religious pilgrimages, however leisure tourism is increasing in popularity. Details have been found about the tourism destination preferences of local versus inbound tourists in 2012. This information is most likely retrieved from entrance fee data, as domestic visitors pay a lower price compared to international visitors. The four main tourist destinations show its popularity by tourists as the international visitor numbers are significantly higher than its domestic numbers.

Figure 9 Domestic and International Tourism Visits to Myanmar in 2012

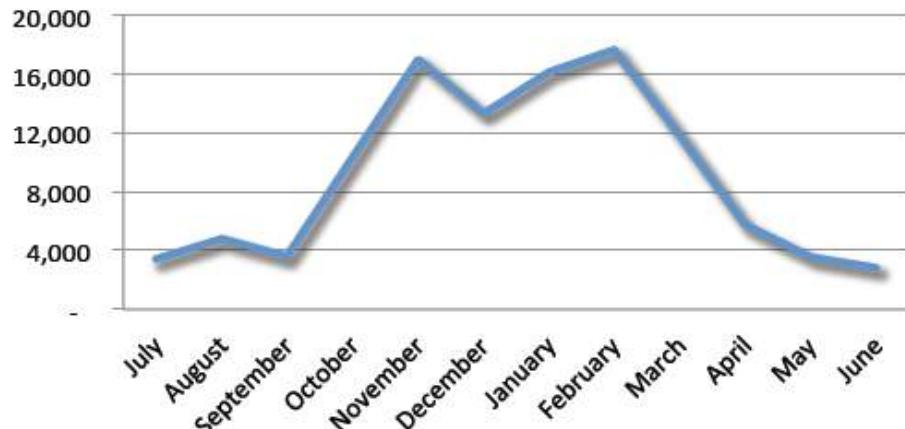
	Domestic visitors in 2012	International visitors in 2012
Kyaikhto	1,000,000	65,788
Mandalay	138,858	160,975
Chaungtha	114,432	12,956
Inle Lake	77,315	90,937
Bagan	49,627	162,984
Ngwesaung	19,298	25,746
Yangon	n/a	559,610
Ngapali	n/a	25,614

Note: n/a = not available

(Kelly, 2014)

The peak in tourist arrivals in Nyaung Shwe, as well as the other main tourist destinations, is during dry season, which occurs from October to March. The wet season from April to September is holding back many tourists due to heavy rainfall restricting leisure activities and accessibility.

Figure 10 Nyaung Shwe and Inle Lake International Arrivals per month, 2013 - 2014



(DMP, 2014)

3.1.3 TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Tourism is viewed as a way to transform, as for example many traditionally agricultural dependent economies have transformed towards service industries, such as tourism. When applied to a tourism destination, “three transformation phases can be observed to commence (inception), grow (construction) and then enter a steady state (urbanization), with ongoing changes defining the exact nature of the region’s growth path” (McLennan, 2009). When applying this theory on Nyaung Shwe, the town can be placed in a construction phase whereas it is heading to an urbanized state, as more tourism facilities are being build. The service industry is growing, however proper training and support is not always available at the moment. There are currently less than 4,000 official licensed tour guides in Myanmar, which results in a shortage of trained guides during peak season. (DMP, 2014). An increasing amount of people in Myanmar are trying to find a job within the growing tourism market. The numerous of hotels opening up are offering these people the chance to work in the accommodation sector. The annual value for tourism is rising every year (WTTC, 2014) and tourism is becoming an important source of income for the national economy. Since 2011 the direct contribution of travel and tourism to employment showed a growth of 16,8%, and kept on growing in following years (WTTC, 2014).

Many SMEs, committees and organizations are developing to offer support and guidance within the tourism market, on a national or local level. In 2012, diverse associations and committees formed the Myanmar Tourism Federation with the purpose of communicating with the government in order to voice private sector concerns about tourism issues. They are actively working in Nyaung Shwe together with several local associations. The main association operating in Nyaung Shwe is the Community Skills Development Center Inle Speaks. Furthermore, various organizations and development actors have begun to provide workshops to different tourism stakeholders. Organizations including GIZ, Myanmar Institute for Integrated Development, Partnership for Change, The United Nations Development Programme, and others have provided trainings on the impacts of tourism to government, private sector and community representatives (DMP, 2014).

3.1.4 THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Nyaung Shwe, as part of the Inle Lake Region is experiencing rapid change both in the visitor economy and culturally as Myanmar develops rapidly resulting from recent political changes (DMP, 2014). Tourism has both favorable and unfavorable impacts on the lake region and, according to the DMP, the area faces some significant difficulties to develop as a “competitive and sustainable destination that is a great place to live, work and visit” (DMP, 2014, p. 60). Four crucial factors are outlined in the DMP’s key issues, SWOT analysis and strategic directions, that have to be attentively managed. Firstly, local communities must benefit from tourism, both directly and indirectly. Also the SWOT analysis highlights job creation and poverty reduction as an important opportunity. Local community employment has to be prioritized and entrepreneurship must be actively supported. A key issue is the challenge of ensuring all of the region’s people, especially poorer and disadvantaged minorities, to get equal opportunities to benefit from tourism. Secondly, the natural environment must be maintained and repaired where needed. The negative environmental impacts of tourism is a major threat and key issue facing the region. Its environment is vulnerable, however a productive and sustainable environment is essential to the sustainability of tourism and the viability of the region. Especially Inle Lake is under major threat; a long-term decrease in lake area has taken place over the last 30 years due to siltation. The clarity of the water has decreased and in many places dredging is necessary (Jassby, 2000).

Thirdly, socio-cultural impacts have to be reduced. The distinct heritage of the region, the landscape, traditions and way of life, religious practices, food, handicrafts, clothing, buildings, and so on, must actively be protected. The loss of authenticity and traditions as well as the evolution of new values of youth and generation division are important threats highlighted in the SWOT analysis. Lastly, a crucial factor is the lack of coordination at the planning and management level of tourism. The large and diverse range of stakeholders, the Governmental Departments, National and International Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Land Owners, SMEs and Private Sector Operators have to actively cooperate to common strategies.

The Inle Lake Region has a booming market demand and potential for regional cooperation. Intercultural exchange and skills and technology transfer are opportunities to overcome the low level of education and trainings towards tourism (DMP, 2014). The area has a strategic location and is a huge, multi-use area which is and, when actively managed, can stay a great place to “live, work and visit”.

3.2 Observations

During my two month stay in Myanmar I have been mainly living in Nyaung Shwe. I got a good impression of the town and learned a lot from observing the daily life. Some of my experiences have been summarized in a narrative that can be found in the preface of this report. Nyaung Shwe is a town where the locals got used to having international visitors around. Most locals are interested and very welcoming towards tourists, with their everlasting smiles and natural hospitality. I have noticed that the people are very respectful and full of curiosity for tourists, as long as they behave respectful towards them. I have seen many tourists dressing like they are on a beach in the south of Europe and were not realizing or respecting the religious etiquettes of the town. The locals are almost all wearing

a longyi, with a blouse covering their shoulders, and thanaka on their cheeks to protect their skin from the sun. However, in the two months I have seen younger people dressed less traditional, in jeans and tops. Besides the way of clothing, I have noticed that the younger generation is getting more interested in modern fashion as they use make up and dye their hair. Modern facilities are easily adopted by the local residents, especially the more wealthy ones. For example, the recently opened banks are always crowded, and residents go to spa and massage places that intentionally opened for tourists. Part of the street view of Nyaung Shwe are Buddhist monks. They are much respected residents of one of the numerous monasteries in town. Religion is an important aspect in the daily life of locals. All houses and public spaces I have visited had a Buddhist altar somewhere and daily prayers are a routine.

Most restaurants are filled with tourists every night. There were just a few places where I saw locals eating, whom were probably domestic tourists. The residents of Nyaung Shwe mainly eat at home and, if not working in the tourism sector, do not mingle with the tourists. The international visitors often did not seem to be open for much interaction with the locals, and many people travel in couples or groups. Many appeared superficial and traveled according to the recommendations of their guide books. Tourists stay two or three days in Nyaung Shwe, from which one day is spent on Inle Lake and the other one or two days are used to explore the town and its nearby surroundings by bicycle, or relax. The locals are happy with the opportunities tourism brings for them. Many people are learning English, to be able to get a good job in the tourism sector. The increase in job opportunities results in more income as more people can find work. Residents are eager to learn from the skills and knowledge of international visitors.

The town is full of construction sites and is starting to get more urbanized as the traditional bungalow style houses disappear and are replaced by high concrete buildings. All newly constructed hotels are many stories high and change the street view of town. Most new buildings are also influenced by international architectures and, if continued like this, the town will start to look more like an international city. There is no proper waste management available in Nyaung Shwe and around Inle Lake. At the moment the people dump, bury or burn their waste somewhere outside of town or in the water of the lake. The air in the whole region is polluted by the smoke from crop and waste burning in the surrounding hills. The streets of Nyaung Shwe are dirty and especially the market area is a very unhygienic place. The research period took place during dry season. Inle Lake's water level was very low and around the waterside of Nyaung Shwe, groups of people were manually dredging the lake by filling bags with sand and mud, to make it possible again for boats to pass. Nyaung Shwe was extremely dry and the dust was polluting the air. When being on a boat on the lake, there is a lot of boat traffic on the lake and at some parts there is a lot of trash floating in the water. Some fisherman await tourist boats to enter the lake, and stand in the famous picture poses before asking the tourists for money.

The telecommunication and internet access is currently unstable in the region, however the situation is developing rapidly with the advent of a second mobile communication network and upgrading of internet services. Regional communication training programs are being established to teach residents in the area on the use of computers, internet, email and social media. Everyone in the region owns a smartphone with internet connection. A television can be found in every house, restaurant and hotel lobby. Besides a few, short power cuts a month, electricity in Nyaung Shwe is stable.

3.3 Interviews

The results of the interviews are presented in relation to the socio-cultural, environmental, and economic changes observed by the participants.

3.3.1 SOCIO-CULTURAL CHANGE

Nyaung Shwe is losing its authenticity with the tourism increase and especially the older aged interviewees are observing changes by younger generations:

"Yes it [tourism] is positive but I am a little sad to lose the Myanmar culture. Especially young people like to copy the western culture." (Interviewee 2, 62 years, female)

The rising amounts of tourists coming to town are influencing the cultural traditions and the behavior of the local residents. The people are in daily contact with international visitors and get introduced to different ways of clothing, accessorizing and new technological devices. The traditional way of clothing is to wear a longyi, a blouse that covers the shoulders and slippers. Nowadays, especially the youth, likes to dress in a Western way by wearing jeans, short tops and shoes. Furthermore, the people start to wear make-up instead of the traditional thanaka, or people dye their hair and get tattoos. Everyone in town has a smartphone and the access to internet makes people aware of what is going on in the rest of the world. There are also more opportunities to learn from the media, and television. The people are curious and like to copy, not only material things, but also the behavior of tourists.

"Before the people were nice and really interested in mixing with the local life. Now people are grumpy and in a rush... I am afraid that the behavior of local people will change. Myanmar people easily copy behavior and will become grumpy and unfriendly like the tourists." (Interviewee 10, 40 years, female)

At the moment most tourists come from neighboring countries, but the European and Chinese market is increasing and with that the attitude of visitors is changing. A new type of tourist is introducing itself to the region as most interviewees notice a change in behavior of visitors, which might have a negative effect on Nyaung Shwe's residents. The authentic type of tourist visiting Nyaung Shwe is interested in the local culture and is seeking for interaction with residents. The new stream of tourists values good service and is less friendly and interested in discovering and learning about the town. They are more demanding and harder to please.

Nyaung Shwe will change towards the desires of its tourists. As they bring the money, they will get served. If they get more demanding, facilities have to get higher standard which can be at the expense of the poorer population who might get less opportunities to work within the industry due to insufficient training and skills. The gap between the poor and rich will only grow.

Besides the changes that are being perceived as negative by the interviewees, also positive changes were mentioned. Good development of tourism are the opportunities it brings to residents to develop themselves:

"Because of the tourism development the education improved as now trainings are offered including English speaking classes, tour guide trainings and computer skill trainings." (Interviewee 9, 30 years, female)

Due to the tourism development a lot of residents are changing their job. For example, many farmers have been able to buy a car and started to work as a taxi driver for tourists. Others changed their jobs because they moved out of town after selling their land to investors. Many people are starting an own business, like for example a guesthouse or spa. Local organizations can now register on a township, district or national level. NGOs are now allowed to work in Myanmar and offer support and cooperation to SMEs. The people have expectations for the country and high hopes for tourism development. In the past three years the rapidly increased tourist arrivals resulted in a high demand for more tourist facilities:

"In 2013 there was an overload of tourist coming to Nyaung Shwe. There were not enough hotels to facilitate the tourists in high season. We accommodated them in the monastery." (Interviewee 8, age unknown, male)

This problem has been solved as many rich locals and external investors have built new hotels and guesthouses, resulting in an increase of 300 rooms within a year. Moreover, with all the newly developed accommodation facilities demand have been overtaken and some hotels are struggling to survive, especially in low season.

Currently there is no architectural style or any regulations concerning aesthetics for the town and many of the recent constructions include styles from around the world. The numerous building plots in town are affecting Nyaung Shwe's authentic street view.

3.3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

Nyaung Shwe has become much more urbanized in recent years, with the development of numerous hotels, restaurants, shops, travel agencies, and so on. With this development, the infrastructure has improved, as dirt roads have been paved and good connections were constructed with surrounding towns. Most interviewees are happy with the developments, as traveling to their family became much easier. Nyaung Shwe's traffic has completely changed with the introduction of the motorbike. Nowadays most locals own a motorbike or even a car, as before all the locals walked, cycled or used water buffalos to pull their carriages. This change in transportation has led to an increase in air and noise pollution.

Besides some factors in Nyaung Shwe, most environmental concerns were expressed towards the condition of Inle Lake. Besides the way locals are exploiting the lake area, the increase in tourism to the region is also leading to negative environmental impacts.

"The wood demand [deforestation], settlement around the lake and climate change [hot and less rain] are endangering Inle Lake." (Interviewee 15, 63 years old, male)

Many years ago the water of Inle Lake was clear and drinkable. Now, over 80,000 people live around the lake area, from which approximately 15,000 on the lake itself. They directly pollute the water with sewage and cleaning liquids for dishes, clothing and bathing. Furthermore, with over 3000 boats on the lake, diesel leaks into the water and the emission pollutes the air. Around the lake, a hotel zone has been assigned, where all trees were cut to make space for constructions. However, most of the area is still uncultivated and is causing a lot of environmental problems as the mud is sliding into the lake. The mud is affecting the water level of the lake. More people want to farm on the lake and plant floating gardens which leads to a decrease in water surface as they fill up the lake. Furthermore, Inle

Lake is containing a lot of chemicals due to the floating gardens. Farmers want to increase their harvest by using chemical fertilizers and pesticides on their products. Therefore the fish from the lake, as well as vegetables harvested from the floating gardens commonly contain chemicals. There is a need for management and regulations to protect the lake's environment. The interviewees all identified Inle Lake as the main reason for tourists to visit the region and are concerned about the way the lake is being handled.

"Inle Lake likely will become a world heritage site in the near future. This means that there will be more funding available for the preservation of the area, but also an increase in visitors." (Interviewee 15, 63 years old, male)

The fact that Inle Lake most likely will become an UNESCO World Heritage Site shows even more how important it is to preserve this natural heritage. It is not just a tourism attraction, it's a legacy to be passed on to future generations.

3.3.3 ECONOMIC CHANGE

Nyaung Shwe is getting economical dependent on its tourism market with most residents working in this industry. Due to the rising tourism industry together with political changes allowing people to act more independent, local residents grab the opportunity to start their own business or invest in tourism related matters. Many investors are attracted to the area due to its increasing tourist arrival and rapid development. External investors buy the land from local residents. The ground of Nyaung Shwe is valuable and therefore the land prices have dramatically increased. The arrival of tourism created a demand which led to big price increases:

"The first hotel in Nyaung Shwe was Inle Inn and came in 1990. From then on a few tourists stayed overnight in town for 1 or 2 dollars a night. Prices were very cheap at that time, you pay now at least five times as much." (Interviewee 5, 60 years old, female)

All interviewees pointed out that in the past two to three years the number of tourism facilities have increased, however no facility has changed even though prices increased enormous. The newly opened facilities resulted in a doubling of job opportunities especially for people to work in the accommodation sector. Many people from outside of Nyaung Shwe have moved to town to work in the tourism and hotel industry. Due to tourism many new businesses opened in the region as for example spas and wineries where introduced for foreign tourists. Everyone in town wants to make a business in the tourism industry and many residents changing jobs. More people can find a job and can make a lot of money from tourism related jobs. Many residents buy expensive goods as items got more affordable in recent years. For example, whereas two years ago a local SIM card was unaffordable for most people, nowadays everyone owns a smart phone with even a decent internet connection via their mobile providers. Internet got integrated and since two years the people are using it to, for example, order food and clothing online from Mandalay, Yangon and Taunggyi. Motorbikes and cars came available to buy second handed from Yangon and Mandalay and therefore became more affordable for most people. Nowadays most people daily use a motorbike. With the opening of two banks in Nyaung Shwe, local residents are now able to save their money on a bank account and transfer money to their family.

3.4 Focus Group

After the individual ranking of the driving forces for change, identified out of the DMP and interview results, all participants has selected the increase of tourism coming to Nyaung Shwe as the first main driving force. It was interesting to notice that all participants are ensured that tourism will continue to grow. All participants think that tourist arrivals will continue growing in the future, and that this increase in arrival numbers will have the most impact on Nyaung Shwe and the surrounding area.

All participants agreed that all identified factors are influencing changes in Nyaung Shwe. Tourism brings opportunities and therefore many people move to the region to find work as well as local residents that move outside of town after selling their land to investors. Tourism positively changes the living standards of local residents as better facilities and job opportunities occur, however there is the danger that things like the local hospitality, culture, and religion gets affected by changes.

The influences on the local culture by tourist presence and behavior, and the environmental issues bringing the lake in danger were both perceived as second most important. This was interesting input for the group discussion. Two of the participants thought that the influences of international tourists on the local culture and traditions was the second most important factor for changing in Nyaung Shwe in the future. The local residents are copying behavior aspects as well as the way of dressing and technological devices and this automatically puts the culture aside. An argument mentioned was that the younger generations do not wear their traditional longyis anymore and dye their hair blond. Another argument mentioned by one of the participants was the local craftwork and weavings, which are now often made according to the desires of tourists to ensure a high sale. The daily life in Nyaung Shwe is influenced and changed by the presence, behavior and wishes of the tourists.

The two other participants did agree with the arguments but placed the environmental problems above the tourist influences on their culture. The nature is their heritage and has to be preserved for future generations. Especially Inle Lake is exploited to its limits by the fisherman and farmers and the villages on and around the water are causing a lot of pollution that all ends up in the lake. Furthermore, the director of Inle Speaks expressed his concern towards the tourist boats that are leaking oil in the lake as well as producing bad air and noise pollution. Inle Lake is the main reason for tourists to come to Nyaung Shwe and all tourists want to take a boat to see this natural environment while visiting the area.

The following figure shows the end ranking that was agreed upon by all participants after the group discussion:

Figure 11 Focus Group - Driving Force Ranking

RANK	FACTOR
1	Environmental issues bringing Inle Lake in danger (e.g. increase of tourists boat on lake, deforestation for hotels around the lake)
2	Every year more tourists come to Nyaung Shwe
3	The local culture is influenced by tourist presence and behavior
4	The town boarders will expand as more people come to Nyaung Shwe to work in the tourism industry
5	Local residents of Nyaung Shwe leave town because they sell their land to investors
6	The type of tourist visiting Nyaung Shwe is changing

During the group discussion, the participants all agreed upon the environmental issues being the most important factor for change. They stated that if the situations continue like this, the lake will start to face major environmental problems in the near future. Considering the role Inle Lake plays in the area, both in the tourism industry as the local farming production and the housing of many residents makes the impact of changes to the lake very high. Therefore, the annual increase of tourism has been identified as the second most important force for change in Nyaung Shwe. As tourism numbers continue to grow, so will the opportunities for locals increase. The economy of Nyaung Shwe will improve and people can become wealthier and develop their skills by learning from the tourist.

CHAPTER 4 – DISCUSSION AND FUTURE SCENARIOS

It is difficult to use historic trend data to predict future markets of Myanmar, as the nature of the industry altered due to political changes and the formation to a democracy. Much of the current tourism development is taking place on the assumption that tourism will continue to increase (DMP, 2014). During the group discussion in the focus group, the interview results have been discussed and the two main driving forces for change in Nyaung Shwe have been defined. My own observations, as well as the findings in the DMP of the region, confirm that the increase in tourism arrivals and the environmental problems occurring due to the tourism increase are the key factors for bringing changes in Nyaung Shwe's development.

The driving forces are placed in an impact matrix, to create four different scenarios. This matrix forms the basis for the future scenario narratives. The matrix looks as following:

Figure 12 Scenario Impact Matrix

<i>Scenario 1</i>	<i>Scenario 2</i>
Tourism number increases every year	Tourism number decreases every year
Environmental problems increase	Environmental problems increase
<i>Scenario 3</i>	<i>Scenario 4</i>
Tourism number increases every year	Tourism number decreases every year
Environmental problems decrease	Environmental problems decrease

Even though the scenarios are built upon the two main driving forces, all identified forces have been included in the narratives. The four different developments create interesting insight into possible future environments, especially due to the fact that currently everyone believes in a continuous growth of tourist arrivals. All future scenarios are taking place in Nyaung Shwe and describe possible operating environments of 2025, ten years from now.

4.1 Scenario 1 – Ignoring the Problem

It is busy on the streets of Nyaung Shwe on this humid day in the summer of 2025. The tight streets are full of cars and noisy motorbikes. When I carefully cross the street I find Nyaung Shwe's market area. Nyaung Shwe used to be full of sellers and traders and the whole village used to gather at the market to get their supply of vegetables and spices. But since the opening of a big City Mart supermarket, the local market got abandoned. Nowadays, it is a quiet and dirty place where the poor part of the population desperately tries to make a living. Only tourists are still visiting the market as it is recommended in their travel guides as a good place to buy souvenirs. They are ignoring the Buddhist etiquette and walking around while looking through their camera, making pictures of pagodas without actually having any interest in them.

When leaving the market I have to step over a big pile of waste and start to get bothered by the bad smell of the trash that is laying around. The lack of proper waste management in Nyaung Shwe is becoming a big problem whereas the municipality pick up system has never worked sufficient and they do not prioritize the issue. In the past ten years the amount of waste has doubled due to the rise of visitors coming to town, but the municipality is ignoring the problem. Health issues start to occur, especially among the poor part of the population. Also Inle Lake is very badly polluted and is endangering the health of its residents. The gap between the poor and rich part of the population increased in the past years. With the rise in tourist arrivals, job opportunities have increased rapidly but only the wealthy part of the population could benefit from this growth. Criminality is becoming a major problem in recent years, because the poor population is only becoming poorer and tries to survive by robbing and stealing. A monk is walking past me towards his car. It makes me realize that really almost everyone in town owns a car nowadays, as even the monks got seduced by this luxury item. Since the tourists are allowed to rent motorbikes in town, the streets became dangerously crowded and accidents occur daily. Due to the increasing tourism the local residents can earn more money and this welfare is shown in luxury possessions and a western way of clothing. The elderly are trying to maintain their cultural traditions by wearing longyis, covering their shoulders and wearing thanaka on their cheeks, but these images are becoming rarer to spot on the streets. Younger generations cannot easily be distinguished with tourists anymore.

When I arrive to the harbor, I notice that there is almost no water in the river and the few boats around are stuck in the mud. There are several tourists standing at the harbor, wanting to take a boat to see Inle Lake, but the locals say it is not possible anymore in this time a year due to the low water levels. They offer to take us a few miles away to a point where the lake is still accessible. The lake has always been the main tourist attraction of the area, but the decreasing water level is becoming problematic. Inle Lake has shrank a third in the past ten years, however the amount of boats touring around tourists only increased. The lake is surrounded by hotels and resorts. Most of the stilt houses on the lake are abandoned due to the low water level not allowing them to be reachable by boat anymore. If nothing is changing soon, more of these problems will occur in the near future.

4.2 Scenario 2 - Dead End

I am standing on an old bridge located at the end of Nyaung Shwe Township, and look down at the parched ground where there used to be a river. It is the summer of 2025 and it should be high tourism season, but there are barely any foreigners around. The wooden frame of an old boat on the ground is one of the last reminders of the role Nyaung Shwe used to play in the boosting tourism industry of Myanmar. It used to be the place for tourists to hang around a couple of days, with a boat tour around Inle Lake as a highlight of their stay. Now the lake has shrunk in such an extent, that it is not accessible anymore during dry season. This has led to a devastating decrease in tourism coming to town and thus many people lost their jobs and their income and most left town. Nyaung Shwe appears poor and dirty and after two days I understand that tourists choose other places over this one. I am getting bored of visiting pagodas, the hotel I am staying in is in a very bad condition but not one hotel is properly maintained, and it is hard to meet people around as most locals are unfriendly or keep their distance, and the little tourists around are part of big tour groups acting like sheep following their shepherd.

The many motorbikes around make the streets noisy. When I am making my way down the main road, I get observed by the locals. They are not seeing many tourists anymore and look interested at my appearance. Most of them are shy, but when I am waiting for the traffic light a middle aged lady asks me in perfect English where I am from and where I am going. She has had a hotel at Inle Lake for 15 years but had to close two years ago because the competition was too high among the numerous hotels fighting for the few tourists that were around. She tells me how sad she is that almost no tourists are visiting anymore. The locals were learning a lot from them and tourism created job opportunities and income for many people in town. When I ask her where she thinks it went wrong, she tells me that the tourism industry of Nyaung Shwe was mainly depending on its environmental resources but they have completely abused them. "We have exploited our environment and now the Lake is suffering. The town looks like a concrete dumping ground for waste. When the tourists stopped coming, things only got worse as people lost their jobs and were hanging around on the streets all day. The foreigners could have helped us by spreading awareness and teaching us how to maintain our natural environment to prevent us from destroying it". I understood her point. The evidence was all around, including empty restaurants, abandoned hotels and the smell of waste at every street corner. People are searching in the trash trying to collect plastic and glass bottles to sell for some small change. A single waste collection car is driving around to collect waste from the hotels while ignoring the burning piles of dumped garbage along the streets. The waste burning is creating a lot of smoke. The climate is very humid and the streets are extremely dry and dusty. All the air pollution makes it hard to breath.

It was not easy, but a few miles out of town I was able to get a boat to see Inle Lake. The lake was small and the water looked very dirty. There were almost no gardens anymore on the lake, but a lot of waste floating around. Also the lake's surroundings appeared said, as most hills were deforested and resorts along the waterside abandoned. The small amount of fisherman left had trouble to catch some of the few fish in the lake. Drastic actions have to be undertaken to turn this environment in a tourism attraction again.

4.3 Scenario 3 – Solving the Problem

It is the summer of 2025 in Nyaung Shwe and the town is in full glory. I just came back from a boat tour around Inle Lake, which I shared with five other tourists. It was a great day to be in a beautiful natural environment while getting to know the stories of other travelers. I have booked my boat tour through the hotel I stay in, which is part of a big tour operator cooperating with all hotels in Nyaung Shwe. This organization makes sure all boats departing are filled, they supply maps of different routes you can take and provide their boat drivers with English language courses to make them able to easily communicate with tourists. A well informed French couple that joined my boat told me that this organization has been recently introduced by the government to improve the management of the boat traffic on the lake. This system makes sure that all boats operating are equipped with new motor blocks, to replace the old ones that were leaking oil in the lake, polluting the air and were very noisy. The lake is in a very good condition, with clear water and an increase of its biodiversity.

More tourists are coming to Nyaung Shwe every year to see the famous Inle Lake, the most beautiful lake of Myanmar. I have been asked to pay an entrance fee for Nyaung Shwe of which the money is used in one of the many environmental protection projects operating in the region. I have heard that, at the moment the government is starting reforestation projects in Nyaung Shwe and around Inle Lake,

to restore its natural environment. The nature has suffered from the rising tourism market as it had to make place for hotels and other facilities. The authorities have realized that, to maintain incoming tourism, they have to restore the environment.

When I am making my way back from the harbor to my hotel, I see a group of students interviewing people on the streets for a school project. I overhear a part of the conversation and am very impressed by the perfect level of English of the young girl interviewing an American tourist. Nowadays, in Nyaung Shwe all the younger generations speak perfect English and are enjoyably showing tourists around and taking them on tours to earn some money. Most elderly are maintaining the old nonverbal communication of constantly smiling and friendly nodding. The project of the girl seems to be about the awareness creation among tourists, and as I am getting curious I wait until she finishes her interview so I can ask her what she is working on. The girl explains that her school is cooperating in a big project about environmental awareness and educational programs towards waste management. For her English class she has to interview foreigners about the waste management at their home countries to gather information, as well as practice English speaking skills. After a little talk, I wish her good luck and continue my walk. Most hotels are reformed to guesthouses with a very personal approach. Since I am here, I have a lot of interaction with the locals of Nyaung Shwe as everyone is well educated and curious to interact and learn from foreigners. The high amount of tourists in town is well managed with enough hotels, educated employees working in the tourism facilities and a proper waste management system in both Nyaung Shwe and on the lake. A good waste disposal system has been financed by international donations, everywhere in town are trash bins and a lot of advertisement on the streets calls both locals as tourists to separate their waste and motivating the people to keep their environment clean. Nyaung Shwe is actively trying to improve, and as a tourist I feel part of this movement to a sustainable future.

4.4 Scenario 4 – Active Recovery

Every year Nyaung Shwe is becoming more and more quiet, as well as this year's summer in 2025. I am cycling around the empty hotels and restaurants and realize how equipped this place is for tourism. Sadly I am one of the few tourists around. Visitor numbers have decreased and so has the amount of boat traffic on Inle Lake. The government has prioritized the preservation of the lake, as an attempt to get tourists back to the region. Reforestation programs have been implemented and water purification machines are now cleaning the lake water. The locals living on Inle as well as in Nyaung Shwe, have been actively educated towards environmental awareness and the amount of waste on the streets has decreased drastically. Also a proper waste pick up system has been introduced, which is successfully operating on the lake and in town. International investments have supported a good waste disposal which put an end to the burning of waste. The air is clear and the views over the lake are beautiful.

One of my days here I spent on a boat that took me around Inle Lake. It was a hassle to arrange a trip, as most boats only serve as taxi for local residents, but after a while I found an old driver that told me with his little English that he could take me on a day tour. Negotiation over the price was impossible and therefore I paid a high price for a day of sitting, but I still really enjoyed the tour and would not want to have missed it. If I ignore the noise of the boat, the lake is quiet and peaceful. When making my way through a village of houses built on stilts, I could observe the daily life routines while being greeted by smiling faces. Most of the empty resorts around the waterside of the lake have been made

available for orphanages, schools and training centers. Local fisherman are catching fish on the lake and farmers are harvesting on their floating gardens.

Back in Nyaung Shwe I take my rental bike and make my way back downtown. Being a tourist here is expensive as all prices are at least double as high for tourists than for residents. I stop at the local market area and enjoy walking around, watching the local people getting their daily supplies. The local residents are all wearing their traditional longyis and blouses. Most people are not really noticing me, only the ones selling souvenirs are slightly desperate trying to get my attention to have me looking at their items. I leave the market to go back to my guesthouse. Nyaung Shwe is recovering and has to start attracting tourists so the town will come alive again.

CHAPTER 5 – DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion

This research started out to identify how tourism developed in Nyaung Shwe, what major issues there are, and how future operating environments could look like. As the interviewees pointed out, tourism development had been rapid and challenging over the last few years. This was confirmed by statistics on visitor numbers and accommodation development (MOHT, 2014). On Butler's lifecycle, Nyaung Shwe is in the beginning of the development phase (Butler, 1980). This phase appears challenging for many tourism destinations as the local involvement and control declines rapidly.

In Nyaung Shwe, major issues identified by the interviewees and own observation are the environmental problems afflicting the region. This includes for example the lack of a proper waste management system in both Nyaung Shwe, but especially Inle Lake, that is resulting in pollution problems affecting the condition of the lake and the air in the region due to the burning of waste. Most interviewees showed concerns for their environment. Inle Lake is an essential part of the tourism market of Nyaung Shwe, however is facing environmental problems as a result of tourism activities. The natural environment is suffering and has to be actively maintained and repaired where necessary. Besides the negative environmental impacts of tourism, also negative socio-cultural impacts were identified. If not consciously preserved, Nyaung Shwe will lose its authenticity due to the increase in international visitors. There is the risk that staged authenticity will develop, where cultural manifestations are adapted to the tastes of tourists. As long as tourists just want a quick glance at local life, without any knowledge or even interest, staging will be inevitable. An example of staged authenticity that is already happening nowadays is the picture posing of local fisherman for tourists. Tourists often look for recognizable facilities in an unfamiliar environment, and with that well-known fast-food restaurants and hotel chains might sooner or later develop in Nyaung Shwe. This could eventually lead to a phase of stagnation or even decline (Butler, 1980).

Many of the identified issues have also been described in the DMP of the Inle Lake Region (MOHT, 2014). The report, however, only presents strategies to address these problems. The future is still unclear. It is quite possible that economic incentives offered by tourism will undermine efforts to secure the lake's environmental health. Instead of simply describing the present problems, my scenarios on tourism growth and environmental change offer a view into the future. As developments are rapid in Nyaung Shwe, the scenarios go in many different ways; they are possible representations of future states of affairs (Moriarty, 2012).

5.2 Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to analyze recent changes in Nyaung Shwe towards tourism development, identify occurring problems and to discuss possible future operating environments.

In Nyaung Shwe, tourism has developed rapidly, and relatively uncontrolled. Since the total arrival number of Myanmar was over 1 million in 2012, the amount has annually doubled and has its effect on the Inle Lake Region. A rapid increase of tourism facilities and external investments have led to major changes in the service town of the region, Nyaung Shwe. The town got more urbanized and

social standards have improved for local inhabitants with better work and living conditions and more opportunities to personally develop.

The major problems for the town are mainly related to environmental issues of Inle Lake. The tourism market of the region is depending on this natural heritage, however it are the tourism activities that are causing many of the problems. Deforestation of the surrounding hills occurs due to hotel construction, and an increase in tourist boat traffic on the lake has its negative impact on the condition of the lake. A continuous increase of tourism will lead to major environmental problems. Loss of authenticity was identified as a problem, particularly for older generations, but in terms of future livelihoods it comes secondary to the environmental change witnessed.

Nyaung Shwe's tourism development is taking place on the assumption that tourism will keep increasing, however in the future scenarios operating environments have been included describing a decrease in visitor numbers, to give a more complete insight in possible future operating environments. If no actions will be undertaken towards the preservation of Inle Lake, it will lose its glory, and will have dramatic consequences on the region's tourism market.

5.3 Recommendations

The DMP of the Inle Lake Region proposes nine strategies towards the improvement of key issues, including specific actions. These suggestions towards the environmental management form a strong strategy, when implemented efficiently.

Nevertheless, complementing the DMP strategies with all findings of the primary research, the following recommendations have been formulated:

Local government:

- **Better cooperation has to be established between governmental departments, NGOs and tourism entrepreneurs towards effective implementation of actions;** one organization with different representatives of important players should be developed to improve cooperation in the region.
- **Actions have to be taken towards restoring and protecting Inle Lake;** firstly, trainings have to be offered to local inhabitants to teach them about the indispensable role for their natural heritage, and therefore its preservation. Secondly, the government should identify limits to stop the exploiting of the lake, by for example determine a carrying capacity for the amount of boats on the lake.
- **Rules and regulations have to be implemented and monitored to put a stop on the exploiting of Inle Lake;** besides a carrying capacity, better strategies have to be formulated towards the hotel constructions around the lake to minimize deforestation. Furthermore, tourist boats operating on the lake should have to get a verification to ensure a sufficient condition, to put a stop on the oil leaking in the lake.

- A proper waste management system has to be established to work towards a reduction of the pollution problems; not only in Nyaung Shwe, especially for the villages on Inle Lake will it bring major reductions of pollution when a good waste system is operating.

NGOs:

- Interactive trainings should be organized to teach the town and lake inhabitants about environmental awareness and preservation; the local NGO Inle Speaks is currently already organizing many workshops with inhabitants. If they can provide valuable input from, for example GIZ (as they are already actively cooperating), to include international knowledge exchange, they could be a good player to take the initiative.
- International NGOs should not only financially support local tourism entrepreneurs, but provide education and trainings to help creating sustainable businesses.

Tourists:

- Visitors to the Inle Lake Region have to be made aware of their impacts on the region, and how to limit their impact; for example on the lake there could be advertised at the regular tourist stops not to throw trash in the water. Also, tourists should be encouraged to share boats to ensure all departing boats are filled to the maximum amount of five passengers.

Town and lake inhabitants:

- Younger generations have to be made aware of the value of a healthy lake environment for their future livelihoods.

CHAPTER 6 - REFERENCES

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CHAPTER 7 – APPENDICES

7.1 Interview Template

Interview # - Date:

Name:

Occupation:

Gender:

Age:

Background:

This interview is part of an investigation towards the tourism development of Nyaung Shwe. The first two questions are focusing on the current and past 10 years. The last question is about a time frame of 10 years from now. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this research.

1. WHAT IS CHANGING?

2. WHAT IS CAUSING THAT CHANGE?

3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

7.2 Interview Results

Interview 1 - February, 12

Name: Swe Swe

Occupation: Owner Thanakha Garden Restaurant

Gender: Female

Age: 28

Background: Born in Nyaung Shwe

1. WHAT IS CHANGING?

More and more restaurants and hotels came in the past year. There is much more competition for our restaurant. However, the people that can afford it just building hotels now without knowing what to do with it in the future – they don't have the knowledge and work without a strategy.

Furthermore, the locals sell their land to rich international investors and have to move away out of Nyaung Shwe.

Because of the tourists, the youth can work in the hotels and also work a lot in the tracking trails in the surroundings.

2. WHAT IS CAUSING THAT CHANGE?

Everyone wants to make business and invest – they see future potential as every year more tourists come.

3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

Every year more tourists come here, and this will continue like this. Locals cannot afford to buy land, the ground in Nyaung Shwe is very expensive. More international investors come. There will be more competition because tourism facilities will continue to develop.

Interview 2 - February, 12

Name: Nyo Nyo

Occupation: Volunteer English teacher

Gender: Female

Age: 62

Background: Born and raised in Nyaung Shwe, worked as tour guide for 17 years

1. WHAT IS CHANGING ?

People are getting forced to learn English to be able to use the Western services that come in town. The people feel they can learn from tourists and their culture. Before, there were not many tourists and they couldn't go everywhere. Now every year more tourists come and they can go everywhere. Locals want to show the non-touristic places to the tourists. Also before, Nyaung Shwe felt like a village, everything was very simple; the simple life. Mostly people from elsewhere in Myanmar came to see the Pagodas and stay in the monastery. Trekking became very popular because of the tourists. Before the locals did some trekking, in for example school trips, but not so far. The tourists now go very far and the locals like to follow the tourists.

Do you see tourism as something positive? Yes it is positive but I am a little sad to lose the Myanmar culture. Especially young people like to copy the western culture. I teach them, they can be interested and sometimes use it, but not always.

Also the technology is changing. First we had to go to an internet café to send an email, now we can do everything via our phones.

2. WHAT IS CAUSING THAT CHANGE?

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3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

More of the culture will disappear and it will become busier on the streets as everything will get more developed. The people in Nyaung Shwe will get more mixed, as more strangers come. Like for example business men, investors as well as migrant workers, tourists and young people who want to work with the tourists. Nyaung Shwe will get more Westernized as technology and fashion will be copied and get available here.

The nature will disappear as more trees get cut down to make room for houses. All the waste from the people pollute the surrounding as well as the lake area.

Interview 3 - February, 15

Name: Yannick Borit

Occupation: Owner French Touch café/restaurant

Gender: Male

Age: 46

Background: French nationality, lived and worked in Nyaung Shwe for 18 years now

1. WHAT IS CHANGING?

More tourists and more shops have opened, and more business men came to Nyaung Shwe. There is more hope; for kids to open up businesses. There is more happiness because people have more opportunities. Before they were drinking a lot, they were down, and wanted to leave the country. Now there are more expectations for the country. Things are clearer. Before everything was arranged under the table, now things are easier, clearer. It is easier to get a passport, for example. Arrangements do not have to be dealt with in secret anymore.

2. WHAT IS CAUSING THAT CHANGE?

Mainly the political situation. There are more opportunities now to do business, everything is clearer and more accessible. Also the banks for example; before people bought gold to keep in their houses as an investment, now they can put their money on a bank account. Secondly, the rising tourism industry, because they create a market to work in.

3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

The future depends on the government. If they take care of natural and ecological situations. For example the hotel zone is something bad; trees have been cut and now mud streams danger the villages down the hill. Also farmers cut trees and this mud goes into the water and damages the lake. Furthermore, they use a lot of chemicals just because they want to do business. Regulations for the use of chemicals have to come. Then there are the boats that are noise, produce a lot of smoke and pollution of the water. There is also a road coming next to the lake to connect to Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon.

Eco tourism is important. That boats become more silent and less polluted. The ecology has to be preserved, by the government.

Interview 4 - February, 15

Name: Han Tun (Thomas)

Occupation: Regional tour guide

Gender: Male

Age: 38

Background: Born and raised in Nyaung Shwe

1. WHAT IS CHANGING?

Before Nyaung Shwe was like the countryside, very small. Now not anymore. The general workers start to change their businesses; people invest their money into tourism. They open their own businesses like information centers. All the people learn English.

2. WHAT IS CAUSING THAT CHANGE?

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3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

The local people will get missing. So many tourists come. Rich people buy the land from the locals who use the money to move to the villages outside of Nyaung Shwe. In this way in the future many things will get missing: like the hospitality, the local culture, and our religion. Furthermore, cultures will mix as locals marry international people.

Do you see tourism as something positive? It is positive that our living standard rise as better facilities and job opportunities occur. But the tourists pollute a lot too. The hotels and restaurants around the lake pollute the area with their waste. The tourists throw trash into the lake and all the tourist boats on the lake are very bad.

Interview 5 - February, 23

Name: Daw Mya Wen (Antry Hnoug)

Occupation: Owner Real Nyaung Shwe Bakery

Gender: Female

Age: 60

Background: Born and raised in Nyaung Shwe

1. WHAT IS CHANGING?

A long time ago tourists came to Nyaung Shwe to get a boat to see Inle Lake and in the end of the day went to Taunggyi to stay overnight there. The first hotel in Nyaung Shwe was Inle Inn and came in 1990. From then on a few tourists stayed overnight in town for 1 or 2 dollars a night. Prices were very cheap at that time, you pay now at least five times as much. The puppet show was set up by the owner of the hotel and this show can still be seen in town. A few more hotels came around that year. In 1999/2000 it was "Visit Myanmar Year", when the government invited foreigners to come. Many people wanted to do business in tourism and the market was slowly developing until 2006 till 2008 when there was trouble with the government. In this period tourists stayed away.

After 2008 more tourists came again and hotels around the lake were build. People came again to work in the tourism market. More people are coming and everything was getting dirtier. Before Nyaung Shwe was a quiet place but now it is more city style with many motorcycles and cars.

2. WHAT IS CAUSING THAT CHANGE?

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3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

I don't know what will happen. I hope more tourists come and prices will be cheaper. Now there are many greedy people and hotel prices are very high. The hotel constructions are very high, I like the bungalow style accommodation better. I hope that in the future a lot of tourists come and stay happy in Nyaung Shwe for a long time.

Do you think tourism is something positive? Yes it is very positive, not negative. It is good for the economy. It gives people work. In hotels, restaurants, hire bicycles, taxi service, food sales on the local market. People here are happy with the tourists so they can make money.

Interview 6 - March, 02

Name: Dar Dar

Occupation: Regional Tour Guide

Gender: Female

Age: 17

Background: Born in Nyaung Shwe

1. WHAT IS CHANGING?

Last 2 or 3 years all hotels and guesthouses came. Now everywhere construction, high buildings, many people can work in hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, work as a boat driver. Before people only used bicycles, now there are so many motorbikes and cars that pollute the air.

Before local people were not interested in their health, now they go to Taunggyi, Yangon, Mandalay or even Thailand (the rich people) for a medical check (every 6 month).

2 Years ago local SIM-cards came available, before only rich people could afford but now everyone has a phone. People shop online since last year. The people of Nyaung Shwe order online (food, shoes, cloths, etc.) from Mandalay, Yangon, Taunggyi.

2. WHAT IS CAUSING THAT CHANGE?

Better education, television, mouth-to-mouth advertisements. Motorbikes became available second hand from Yangon and Mandalay, so very affordable.

3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

More job opportunities will come. Much more improvements for tourism because everything is more connected; much more facilities. More roads will come; will get improved because more cars and better connections to hotel zone. Food products will not have to get exported anymore to Mandalay and Yangon because the local demand will increase when more visitors will come.

Education will improve; local people will learn computer skills, English speaking skills.

Interview 7- March, 03

Name: Julie Campbell

Occupation: Cultural Anthropologist

Gender: Female

Age: 80

Background: British nationality. Traveled several times to Myanmar, since 1988 and 2005 onwards.

1. WHAT IS CHANGING?

What isn't changing? Everything changed. Before the buildings were maximum 2 stories high, but the new hotels they are building go up to 10 stories. Now there are less traditional houses, everyone builds cheap cement houses. Most roads where dirt roads. There were water buffalo's walking around everywhere. People used bicycles or walked but now there are so many motorbikes and even cars. There is so much more noise. The village feeling is gone. Now there are banks and ATM machines. Now there are spas and massage places, a winery and modern mountain bikes you can rent; they all came for tourists.

Most of the tourists now are superficial and are not really interested in the place and its culture. They are grumpy and don't talk with the locals. Also the locals changed as the traditions are disappearing. Before everyone had flowers in their hair, traditional hairdos and everyone wore a longyi and blouse. Now you see some locals in jeans and no one wears flowers anymore.

2. WHAT IS CAUSING THAT CHANGE?

The government is not a western democracy, there are still no good human rights and the rules became stricter. They were not prepared, they was no good infrastructure for the tourist flow; not only the roads but also the facilities, education and trainings, no English language skills, no certificated guides, and so on. Now they just build and build without having the knowledge and without thinking of the future.

Another thing is the mixture of cultures which affects the traditional way of life here. The younger generation dresses as the tourists, all walk around with a smartphone, get tattoos. The access to television and internet also changed a lot as the people here now hear what is going on in the world.

3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

The gap between rich and poor will become bigger. No one thinks of the poor, they don't have education or medical access. The local people might become grumpy as they copy the behavior of tourists; they don't smile, say hello or thank you. It's a bad influence for the locals. The roots of the village will remain, as the real locals will not leave their homes. But the town will change. The market might be taken down due to bad hygiene. The demography of the town will change and the town area has to expand. The electricity supply will be better.

Interview 8 - March, 06

Name: /

Occupation: Monk

Gender: Male

Age: approximately 55

Background: Born in Nyaung Shwe, has been a monk since childhood

1. WHAT IS CHANGING?

In 2013 there was an overload of tourist coming to Nyaung Shwe. There were not enough hotels (#20) to facilitate the tourists in high season. We accommodated them in the monastery. 80 tourists per night. Manager of queen inn and tourism police asked the monks for the permission to facilitate the tourists a bed in the monastery for 5000 per night. Peak season was around the Balloon festival in Taunggyi in November as well as around Christmas and Chinese New Year.

Economy changed; people can make more money. Farmers can sell more; to tourists and hotels. Economy is getting dependent on tourism. In low season people cannot make money (hotels and restaurants empty, tourist boats not in use, etc.).

Education changed; before 2010 few tourists came. After wards many people came to Nyaung Shwe. People have to be trained, to work as a tour guide. Younger people are really interested in tourism, because they know they can make a lot of money working in this industry.

Transportation changed; before 2010 most roads were very bad and bumpy. They had to improve the roads for the tourists to come, for buses and bicycles. Beneficial for locals; they can easily reach the town and use the improved roads so they can go better around within the area.

2. WHAT IS CAUSING THAT CHANGE?

Because of the rise in tourism; more and more domestic as well as international travelers come to Nyaung Shwe.

3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

Hopefully it will develop in a good way to make the town better and better. But I am worried about the local prices. People are not honest about the prices of products anymore. They will rise the price if they think you are rich and especially with international tourists this might become a problem.

More tourists coming means more boats on the lake, which has a very bad influence on it. It will be more polluted, the water level will decrease and the ground steers up because of the vibration of the boat engines.

Interview 9 - March, 13

Name: Daw San San Aug
Occupation: High School teacher
Gender: Female
Age: 30
Background: Born and raised in Nyaung Shwe

1. WHAT IS CHANGING?

There are many restaurants now. More people come to town, to work or as tourists so the restaurant can sell more food and more restaurants developed. The local market is much bigger than a couple of years ago. Because of the tourism development the education improved because trainings are offered including English speaking classes, tour guide trainings and computer skill trainings. Also transportation improved as new roads were built which created better connections. Now there is a road to Pae Khon and Nay Pyi Taw from Nyaung Shwe. Life improved because transportation became better.

The town has grown because of the people that come here to work. The land in Nyaung Shwe becomes more expensive every year so people who want to live here and work look for a place to live outside of town. Tourism is good because it is connected to the economy. We can make money more easily because of the opportunities it brings. My man is a bus driver and also drives tourists so he makes more money when there are tourists.

2. WHAT IS CAUSING THAT CHANGE?

The international tourists that come here, but also domestic tourists that visit the Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda for good fortune.

3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

Things will improve as more houses, schools, hotels and restaurants will be built. This also has a negative side though; because more people come, more people will find a job but there also will be more waste, which is a big problem. More cars and telephones will come as prices will decrease. Eventually the climate will change. All the hotels use generators and all the air pollution will cause a higher climate.

Interview 10 - March, 14

Name: Sue

Occupation: Owner Bamboo Cooking Class

Gender: Female

Age: 40

Background: Born and raised in Nyaung Shwe

1. WHAT IS CHANGING?

Everyone wants to do business now. More hotels are being build and the prices have doubled but the facilities stayed the same. The people living in Nyaung Shwe don't think about the future. They can make money now so they sell their land. Also outside of town the land is sold to investors. Before there was forest everywhere. Before all the life was simple and quiet and all the people worked on the land as a farmer. Now they are owning a car and proudly working as a taxi driver, there are concrete roads everywhere with a lot of traffic, including big truck going to construction sides. The streets are crowded and dangerous now. Not long ago many houses didn't have electricity.

Tourists also come to help locals with education or donations. Business people have power, money and connections with the government; they can make real profit from tourists. The lower classes cannot earn much as they mainly have simple jobs and miss a future view on things. Religion also changed. Monks are influenced by money. Monasteries have satellites. Recently people even donated a car to a monk, I am very sad to hear that. The tourists that come changed too. Before the people were nice and really interested in mixing with the local live. Now people are grumpy and in a rush.

2. WHAT IS CAUSING THAT CHANGE?

Everything is changing because of the tourists coming here. Which is a good and a bad thing. It is good that more jobs are available and people can have a better income. But a bad thing is all the development just to make money. The locals are blinded, they just want to make business.

3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

The local people are destroying their local culture and traditions. The development will continue like this. Nyaung Shwe will become a crowded city. Life will change for many people. Only the life of the people that don't speak English and cannot work for tourists will stay the same. Even though the town will become bigger and more crowded. Less people will work on farming and more people will change to a city life by for example buying a car and become a taxi driver. I am afraid that the behavior of local people will change. Myanmar people easily copy behavior and will become grumpy and unfriendly like the tourists.

Interview 11 - March, 15

Name: Aung Myo Thu (Peter)

Occupation: Assistant General Manager Thanakha Inle Hotel

Gender: Male

Age: 29

Background: From Taunggyi, moved to Nyaung Shwe 15 years ago

1. WHAT IS CHANGING?

Nyaung Shwe used to be a small town with just a few tourists. There were just a few guesthouses, no big hotels like now. In the past 2 years many hotels were opened as well as many restaurants, shops and even banks. At the moment there are 2 banks here, but they are building a 3th one. Locals use the banks to transfer money to their family. The additional way of building is not used anymore as many international architects influence the way of building. For example this hotel is from an Italian architect and the big hotel opposite of the waterside is constructed by an architect from Thailand.

Also the technology changed. Before there were 2 or 3 internet cafes where the people had to go to send an email whereas now you can get wireless internet everywhere. Because of the high demand the land in Nyaung Shwe is very expensive and all people with money invest by buying the ground from locals. Also the prices of products became more expensive, in for example the restaurants and mini markets.

Besides the increase in international tourists there are also more locals traveling to Nyaung Shwe. The country is developing and as people can do business more easily they can earn more money. The people become aware of things and think more for themselves. They spend their money on traveling because they want to see places and develop themselves.

2. WHAT IS CAUSING THAT CHANGE?

All development in Nyaung Shwe is because of tourism. Many people in and around town earn money from the tourists nowadays. When tourists come we can have money.

3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

The future will be good for business and Nyaung Shwe will get more and more developed. Cultures are mixing in the future. The foreign cultures are very different from the Myanmar culture. Western people have another way of thinking and are well educated. In the future the local people have learned from tourists and know how to do business. There are many good things locals can learn but it is important that they don't lose their culture. I am worried that in the future Myanmar will be like Thailand, like Bangkok, where tourists only go for parties and drinking and the culture is lost. We have to choose what we copy from tourists. Especially the younger generation is very easily influenced and copies the behavior and attitude from tourists. We should learn from their knowledge and their way of thinking but should not lose our culture to drinking and parties.

Interview 12 - March, 18

Name: Ko Win Nyunt

Occupation: Traditional Burmese massager and owner of Win Nyunt Inn Hotel

Gender: Male

Age: 41

Background: Lives in Nyaung Shwe since 22 years

1. WHAT IS CHANGING?

Especially in the last 2 to 3 years the town has developed very rapidly. Many hotels, restaurants and shops came as well as travel agencies. Everything became more expensive in town and more tourists were coming every year. The people In Nyaung Shwe became richer and many people now own a car. This became cheaper and you can buy a car with a three year pay back system for example. The poorer people sell their land and move to the area between Nyaung Shwe and Shwe Nyaung. People from Bagan and Mandalay come here to work.

The youth is becoming more aware of things and are eager to learn. They want to travel to other countries. They go to work abroad, to Singapore or Malaysia, for 3 years, because there they can make more money. When they come back they are rich and can buy a car.

The lake has become smaller and the water level is decreasing. Now in dry season you cannot reach all the villages by boat anymore, you have to walk through the water.

2. WHAT IS CAUSING THAT CHANGE?

The changes are because of the many tourists that come to Nyaung Shwe. There is more work when there are more tourists.

3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

More business will come. Doing business will become more easy and the circumstances will become better. After the next election things will change and become more open; the country will be more open so people can travel more easily to other countries. More rich people will come to Nyaung Shwe. The infrastructure will be better and all the roads will be repaired. Also new school buildings will be build.

Interview 13 - March, 19

Name: Hay Mann Aung

Occupation: Worker at shop and regional tour guide

Gender: Female

Age: 21

Background: Born in Nyaung Shwe

1. WHAT IS CHANGING?

Many more hotels appeared in Nyaung Shwe the last years because of all the tourist coming. The tourism brings more job opportunities in the region and many people come to work here. There is a higher demand in the region for farmers and more food is being stored which also results in more jobs as people have to transport the tomatoes from the farmers to the storage to the export place. Another example are the banks we have now where people can work. The education stayed the same but there are more trainings available to learn English and Computer skills for example. Transportation is improving because they work on the roads and there are more busses and people with a car.

2. WHAT IS CAUSING THAT CHANGE?

Because of the tourists more hotels are built to facilitate them. This brings also more job opportunities and to benefit from these opportunities people want to learn English and Computer skills.

3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

Tourism will more develop however the lake is in danger and it is important to maintain it because it's the things attracting the tourists to come here. Nyaung Shwe is developing more and more because of tourism and they come to see the lake, but this tourism is destroying it. Because more hotels are built around the lake and more boats are driving tourists around which both are causing damage to the lake.

Interview 14 - March, 21

Name: Barbara Bauer

Occupation: Executive Officer Myanmar Partnership for Change

Gender: Female

Age: 71

Background: American nationality, traveled to Myanmar regularly since 2005. Working in Nyaung Shwe since 2 and a half years.

1. WHAT IS CHANGING?

The traffic to town is increasing with a lot more international tourists coming to Nyaung Shwe. In the last two years there came 300 more rooms in town. Tourism became easier because of the policy change of the country. Nowadays tourists can visit more places around Nyaung Shwe and south of the Lake. They still have to ask for permission for some areas but a couple of years ago they were not allowed at all. There is a quick change in the looks of the locals. They pick up the Western clothing style and wear jeans and shoes instead of longyi and slippers.

2. WHAT IS CAUSING THAT CHANGE?

The policy reforms made the tourism industry possible as the country became more accessible for international visitors. The country is progressing to democracy, but is not there yet. The national government is still ruled for 25% by the military.

3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

This year are the national elections and how the future will look like is partly depending on the outcome of this election. If the situation stays stable everyone will be interested in investing in Nyaung Shwe as it is one of the main tourism destinations of the country. The education environments will improve and the educational system will get better as people are more aware and therefore motivated to learn and develop their knowledge. The telephone provider Telenor is coming to Nyaung Shwe and soon there will be high speed internet. The media opens up, which will lead to awareness and innovation. There are more tourists coming from Europe and America and therefore franchisers and western brands will soon start looking for investments in Nyaung Shwe (and Bagan). The awareness of external markets is growing and the import of products will increase as well as the trading of products. An improvement of agricultural markets will occur as more modern agricultural techniques are being used (cooling trucks to keep products fresh). Furthermore the roads will be improved and better connections between towns will be developed. Also the airport in Heho is expending.

Interview 15 - March, 23

Name: Sai Win

Occupation: Director Inle Speaks

Gender: Male

Age: 63

Background: Lives and works in Nyaung Shwe since many years, since 2013 started working as director of the local development organization Inle Speaks

1. WHAT IS CHANGING?

In the last 2 years a big increase in hotel investments took place which resulted in a lot of job opportunities for the people. Everyone wants to work in the hotel and tourism sector where most people find a job in one of the hotels, as the tourism sector requires more skills. Before there were not many trainings available whereas now a lot of international NGO's came to provide educational programs and help to improve different SME sectors. There are also more opportunities to learn from the media, television and internet. There is also a big political change as the government now it is much easier for local organizations to register on a township, district or even national level. Furthermore now they allow foreign NGO's in the country to work with local organizations. In general it is much easier to do business due to the change in policies. The people can now also talk freely about politics. The government has a strict policy for responsible tourism as many things get copied from tourists. It is in the human nature to want what they don't have and many locals are copying the tourists (hair coloring, wearing short pants). The local culture has to be promoted again to be preserved by the youth. The economy is the main factor for change, whereas people with a stable income will have more time to educate themselves and develop (attending workshops and trainings). When they educate themselves they can work more effective and in a better way. Compared with last year, the economy has grown with 8,5%. Last year the average stay of tourists was 2 days, with a spending of 70 dollars a day, whereas now this went up to an average stay of 4 days and 120 dollars spending. So, the income from tourism is going up.

2. WHAT IS CAUSING THAT CHANGE?

The rising hotel and tourism sector offers more jobs for the people, but also due to the climate change and use of chemicals the farming production is not very good so younger people are trying to find a job in the service oriented sector instead of the production sector.

3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE?

Local stakeholders worry about that Inle Lake becomes only a hotel and tourism sector as younger people are not interested in farming. The cultural heritage and environment needs to be preserved by reducing the hotel investments around the lake. Inle Lake is a cultural heritage now and likely will become a world heritage site in the near future. This means that there will be more funding available for the preservation of the area, but also an increase in visitors, besides the people that will come to find a job and NGOs that start operating in the area. In the future, Nyaung Shwe might be the main destination in Myanmar as there are many things to offer tourists: cultural traditions, interesting ethnic minority, a beautiful environment, and activities like hiking, cycling, kayaking and bird watching. But important is to preserve the environment as well as the culture. The wood demand (deforestation), settlement around the lake, and climate change (hot and less rain) are endangering Inle Lake.