Supporting Telekyanmar: building a path to charity registration and sustainable funding

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1 Background

Telekyanmar is a volunteer-led telemedicine organisation offering remote healthcare to displaced and conflict-affected communities in Myanmar.[3]
It works as a **civil society organisation (CSO)** without formal legal registration. That limits access to institutional grants, UK donation routes such as Gift Aid, and formal partnerships.
With its existing grant funding due to end in 2026, the team wanted a clear, realistic route to a more secure future.

2 Aims

1. **How can Telekyanmar become legally registered as a charity?**
2. **How can it build sustainable, diversified funding?**

3 Challenges

- Working across language barriers and time zones
- A volunteer team needing time to consult before deciding
- Explaining three very different legal frameworks clearly
- An unpredictable political context in Myanmar
- A promising UK charity partnership that did not go ahead, due to the charity's own funding constraints
- Fitting the work around full-time clinical jobs

4 Approach

Feb — Listening & scoping
Orientation calls with partners; agreeing priorities together

Mar — Research
Registration routes, outreach to UK charities and networks, funding landscape

Apr — Presenting options
Visual comparison and plain-language summary shared with partners

May — Implementation support
Application content, MOU frameworks, donation set-up guidance

Jun — Partnerships & funders
UK charity partnership explored; funder mapping and outreach

Jul — Evaluation & handover
Partner feedback questionnaire, handover pack, final report

Figure 1. Six-month project plan, delivered virtually. Progress was tracked against process, output and outcome indicators.

5 Findings: three registration routes

UK charity registration

Charity Commission (England & Wales) or OSCR (Scotland)[1–2]

+ Credibility with UK funders; Gift Aid and grant eligibility
– Needs trustees, a governing document and annual reporting

Thailand-based NGO or foundation

Registration closer to the region of operation

+ Close to the communities served and regional partners
– A different legal framework and in-country requirements

Umbrella or partner charity

Working under an established UK charity

+ Fastest way to receive funds, with shared governance
– Depends on the partner's own capacity and priorities

Figure 2. Registration and partnership options compared, presented to partners in April 2026 as visual slides and a summary.

6 Funding model



Figure 3. Six funding categories mapped, with named prospects such as Wellcome Trust, Comic Relief and FCDO.

7 Impact

Clear options
Three registration routes researched, compared and shared in accessible formats

A funding map
Six income categories mapped, with named funders and practical next steps

Lasting resources
A shared library of research, templates and contacts for Telekyanmar and future fellows

Continuity
Telekyanmar has since secured its own 2027 funding, giving time to build longer-term options

Partner voice
A feedback questionnaire so partners could judge the fellowship's value themselves

8 Recommendations

For Telekyanmar

- Agree one preferred registration route and name a sustainability champion to lead it
- Build relationships with funders before applying
- Spread income so no single donor carries the organisation
- Use NHS and fellowship links as credibility with UK funders

For future fellowships

- Spend the first month listening and let partners set priorities
- Share options visually
- Understand that project aims can change throughout and learning to be adaptable

References

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