

# The Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund in Myanmar



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LIFT thanks the governments of Australia, Denmark, the European Union, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America for their kind contributions to improving the livelihoods and food security of the poorest and most vulnerable people in Myanmar. Their support to the Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT) is gratefully acknowledged.

Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund  
12(O), Pyi Thu Lane  
7 Mile, Mayangone Township  
Yangon, Myanmar

[www.lift-fund.org](http://www.lift-fund.org)

©2014 All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means: electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission of LIFT.

All photographs courtesy of: Jacquetta Hayes, Ye Min Thwin, Tim Mitzman, Yasmin Padamsee, Better Life Organisation, GRET, SWISSAID, Terre des Hommes, LEARN, Mercy Corps and Cesvi.



# Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund





## Working Together to Improve the Livelihoods of People in Rural Myanmar

The Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT) has been working in Myanmar since 2009 to assist the country in its efforts towards achieving Millennium Development Goal 1 – to reduce the number of people living in poverty and hunger by half.

LIFT targets smallholder farming families and the landless rural poor, funding projects that help them to raise their incomes, improve their nutrition and food security, and live better lives. Our projects provide opportunities for sustainable growth, for quality harvests, improved and innovative access to credit and markets, while bolstering peoples' abilities to cope with setbacks and change.

LIFT is supported by eleven donors: Australia, Denmark, the European Union, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Switzerland, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Focusing on aid effectiveness, more than \$205 million has been pooled to support over 90 projects across Myanmar's four agro-ecological zones - the Uplands, the Dry Zone, the Ayeyarwady Delta and Coastal regions. LIFT supports activities in more than half of the townships in the country.

Working in close cooperation with government, LIFT's vision is to be an influential voice for innovation and learning, and to provide a platform for enhanced policy engagement on sustainable agriculture, food security and rural development. Over 40 studies and reports have been generated to collect essential data, inform programme design and advise policy decisions.

Projects are implemented through national and international NGOs, academic institutions, research bodies, the UN and the private sector. So far, 2.5 million people - or roughly five per cent of the country's population - have benefitted from LIFT support.

In appreciation of the cooperation and support from the Government of Myanmar, and to promote the United Nations International Year of Family Farming, this booklet illustrates some of LIFT's achievements to mid-2014. It also outlines some of the elements of LIFT's updated strategy that will guide it to the end of its mandate in 2018.

Together, we are making a difference.



**Delta**



**Dry Zone**

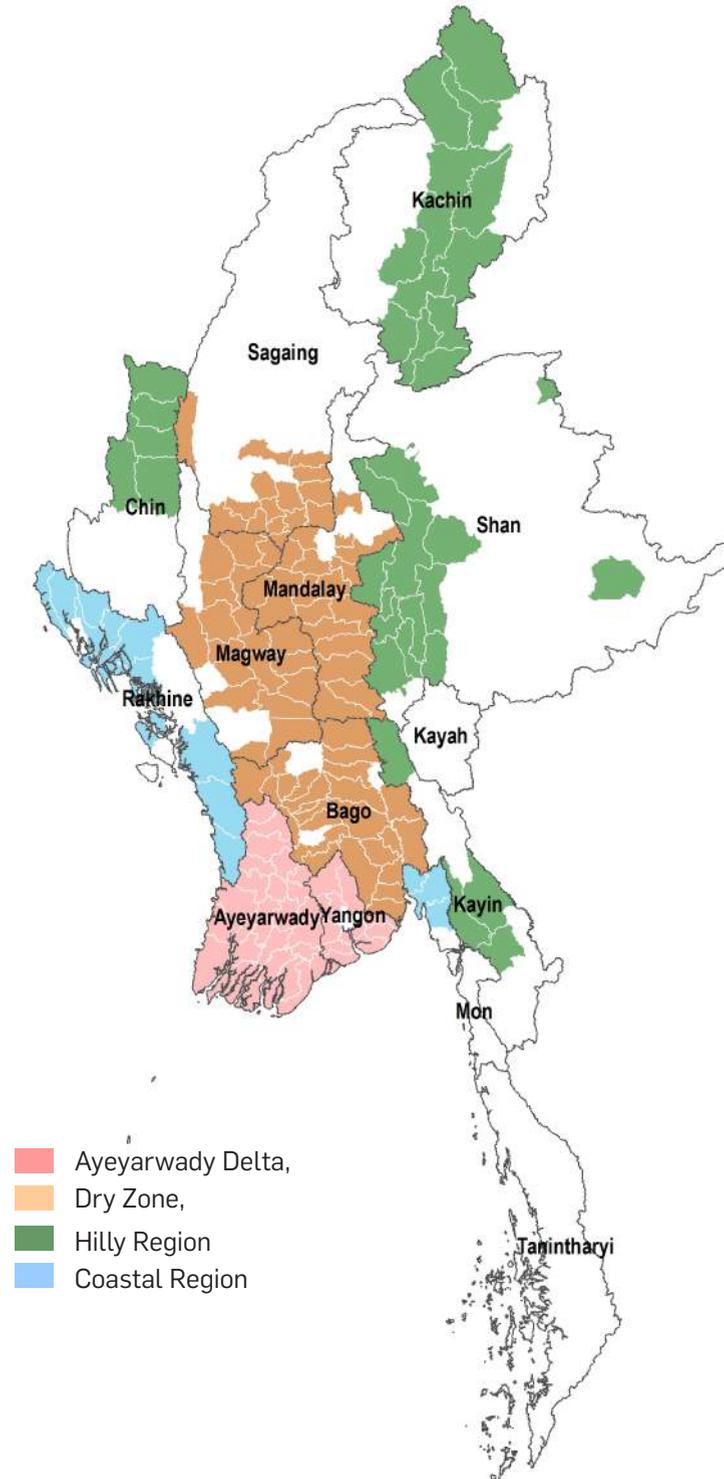


**Coastal Area**



**Hilly Region**

# LIFT Country Coverage by Agro-Ecological Zone







LIFT has been working in Myanmar since 2009,  
and has improved the lives of more than  
two and a half million people..

# Achievements to mid 2014

LIFT is active in

# 170

(out of 330) townships  
across the country

# 249,000

people received capacity  
development training



# 576,000

households were  
supported by LIFT



# 30%

of them received  
cash-for-work

LIFT has reached  
more than

# 7,300

households with  
disabled people





**290,000**

households  
increased their  
food security  
by more than  
one month



**21,000**

people were  
trained in  
environmental  
protection,  
conservation or  
rehabilitation



**183,000**

households had accessed  
credit for farm and non  
farming purposes

---

LIFT focuses its assistance on the poor and vulnerable, aiming to increase their incomes and improve their food security and nutrition. The fund helps communities cope with the effects of climate change, and it provides data-based evidence to inform pro-poor policy development.

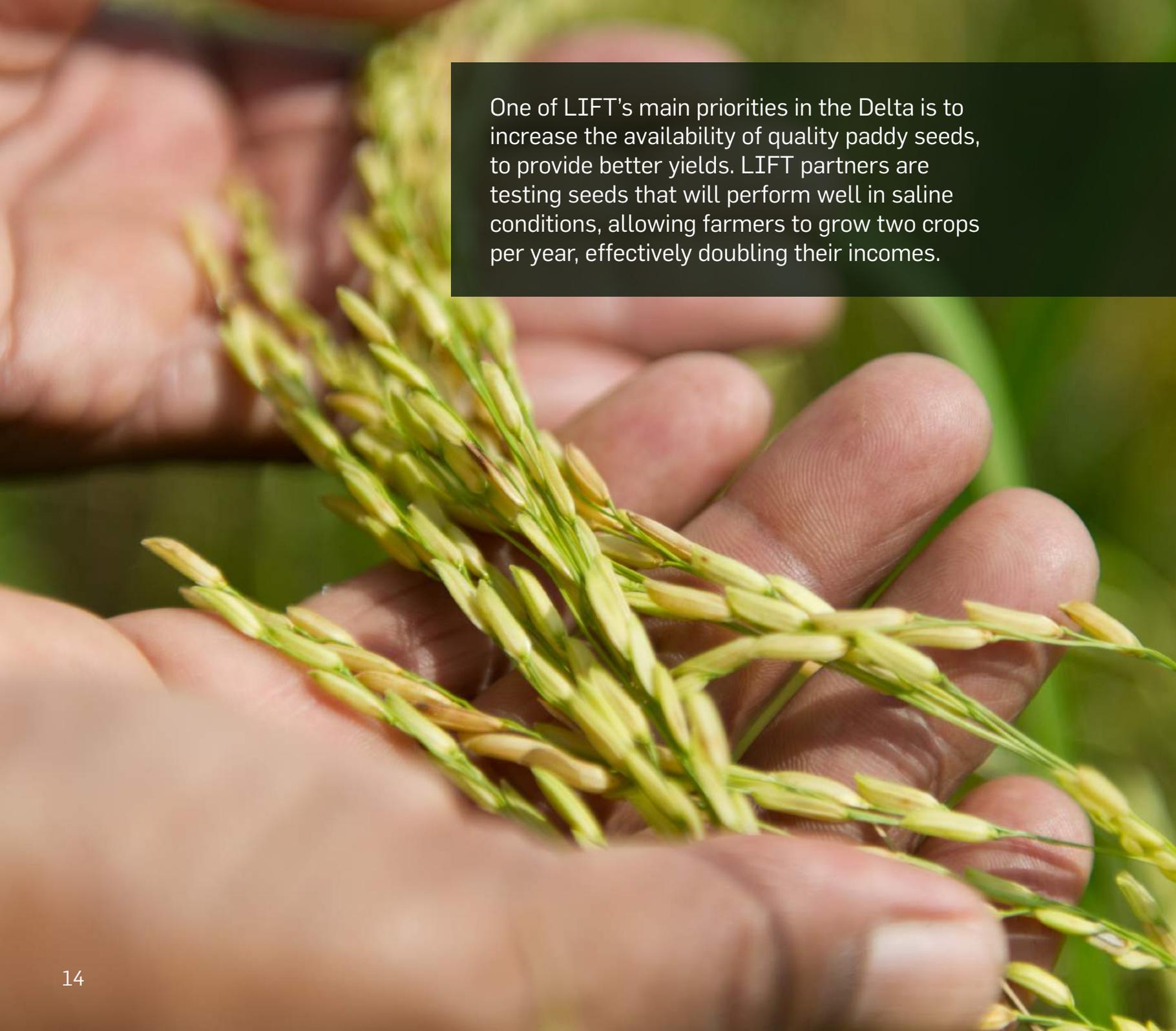
---







Helping Small Holder  
Farmers Increase  
Their Productivity



One of LIFT's main priorities in the Delta is to increase the availability of quality paddy seeds, to provide better yields. LIFT partners are testing seeds that will perform well in saline conditions, allowing farmers to grow two crops per year, effectively doubling their incomes.



During the dry season, access to water is a problem for farmers in much of the country. LIFT introduces simple technologies that save water and dramatically cut the time spent hauling water to crops, freeing up farmers to be more productive.



To mid 2014, LIFT had supported 10,000 fishing households in wild capture fishery, and the fund continues to promote fishing policy that respects the rights of family fishermen.



A number of LIFT partners are working to reduce losses after harvest, and to ensure the best quality of produce throughout the drying, storage and milling processes.



A photograph of a market scene. In the foreground, there is a large pile of onions, some of which are covered in orange mesh bags. A white price tag is visible among the onions. In the background, several people are present. A man in a white shirt and grey trousers stands to the left. Another man in a blue and white striped shirt is crouching to the right. A purple cloth is draped over a person's legs in the center. The setting appears to be outdoors with trees and a simple building in the background.

# Improving Access to Markets



In the Dry Zone, a project provides training to marginalised women in sowing, weaving and craftwork so that they can produce quality goods for the tourist trade. Not only are incomes raised; the women are also given access to basic services, such as legal advice, health and family assistance.



In 2013, a pilot project set up commodity markets to put farmers and traders in direct contact. These are proving to be very popular. Prices from Yangon are announced by radio, and traders come in from Mandalay and Yangon to share their experiences. Farmers have learned that quality produce achieves better prices.



Recently, the Fund has set up partnerships with the private sector to promote small-holders in contract farming.

LIFT also works along entire value chains to ensure that family farmers and the landless are given the opportunity to be included in quality, larger scale production.







# Increasing Livelihoods Opportunities Away from the Farm

More than 17,000 households report that their incomes increased after taking part in LIFT-funded training, for example in hairdressing, tailoring, mechanics and boat building.





Nearly 30,000 people have been trained to establish their own enterprises - and 94% of them are women.



A close-up photograph of a white ceramic plate with a scalloped edge. The plate is filled with cooked corn kernels, with a top layer of yellow kernels and a bottom layer of green kernels. Several red and yellow flower-shaped decorations are scattered on the plate. In the background, a white bowl with a floral pattern contains a yellow liquid. The plate is on a red surface with a black geometric pattern.

# Improving Food Security and Food Utilisation



Having assisted 290,000 families to increase their food security by more than a month, the fund is highlighting the role of good nutrition in sustainable development.

Training is given to implementing partner staff to ensure that nutritional messages are understood and shared in every project. Cooking demonstrations take place in villages and nutrient rich foods are being introduced in remote locations.







# Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

Communities are trained to protect local resources and the environment. Cleaner cooking stoves that use less fuel are manufactured and promoted locally.





Climate change in Myanmar is seen through erratic or extreme rainfall. One way that LIFT mitigates the risks is by funding village ponds through cash-for-work programmes.





# Capacity Development

LIFT helps farmers to increase their yields through training of new and locally adapted agricultural practices at farmer field schools. Here, farmers learn the simple process of salt-water seed selection, which sorts the seeds leaving only the healthiest for planting. Yields can double after this process.



In line with government reforms, LIFT has established or strengthened nearly 10,000 local organisations. LIFT works closely with civil society in order to reach poor rural people, and much of LIFT's capacity development training happens on-the-job.







Generating  
Policy-Relevant Evidence  
regarding Smallholder Farmers  
and Landless People

LIFT has commissioned more than 40 reports, surveys and studies to better understand the sector. These reports have helped focus programme design and they provide hard facts to inform policy development.



A group of men are seated at a long table in a conference room. They are wearing white shirts and have microphones in front of them. There are several water bottles and glasses of orange juice on the table. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and a window with yellow curtains.

LIFT and its partners work closely with the Government of Myanmar at union, regional and local levels, providing research-based evidence to guide policies that will improve the lives and prospects of the rural poor.





## Access to Credit

LIFT promotes financial inclusion. Microfinance loans are available for both farming and non-farming purposes. In most cases, the lady of the house holds the purse strings - 86% of borrowers are women.



Credit can extend into remote areas such as rural Chin State through self-help groups. Community-run rice banks also work well to provide members with credit at harvest time, when farmers need cash to pay back the loans they took out to grow the crops.





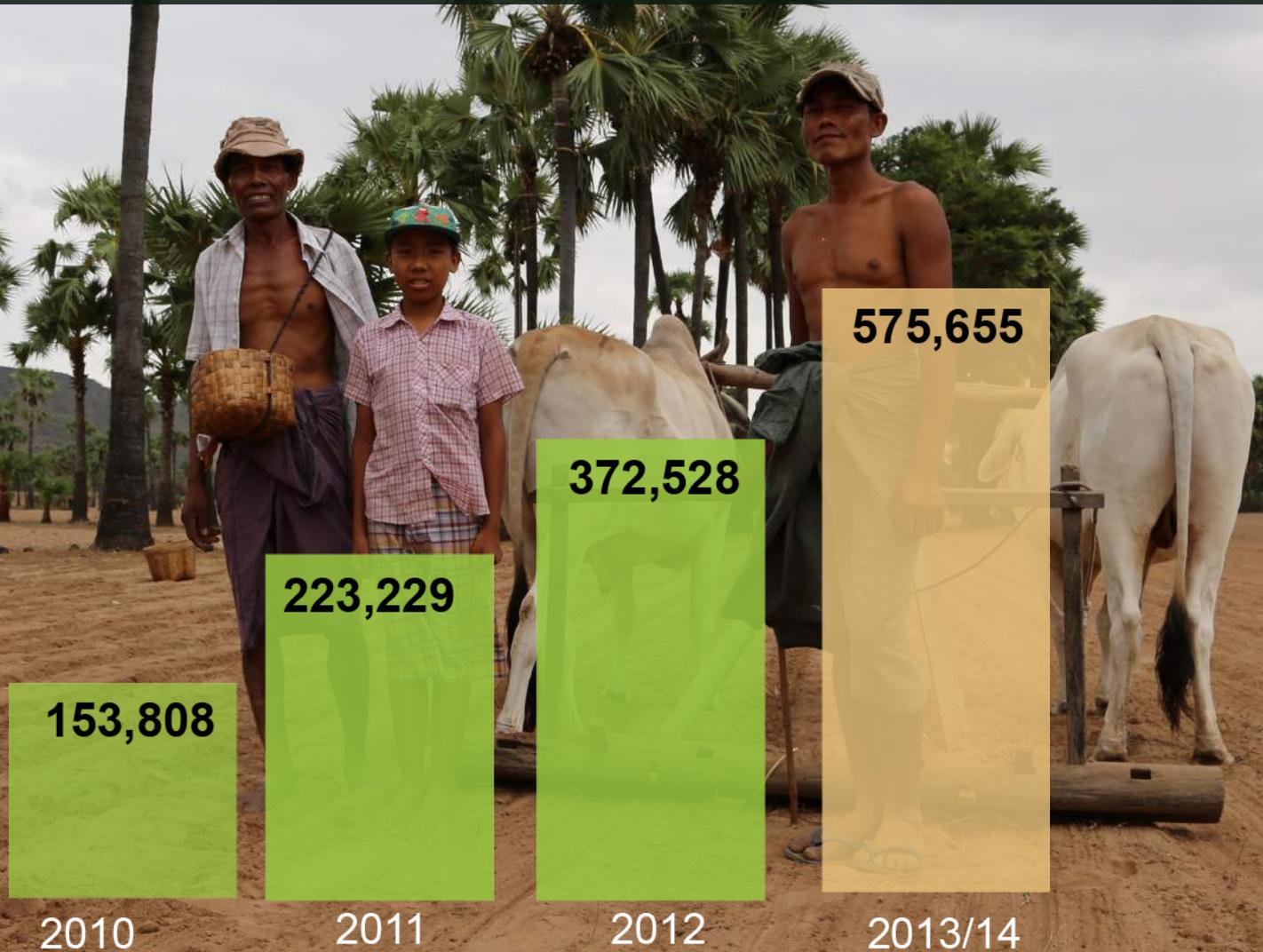
# Looking Ahead

In an inclusive process that involved the government, LIFT has updated its strategy for the period 2014-2018. With three new regional programmes in development, the fund looks forward to continuing to work in hand with government to ensure that small holder farmers and the landless play an important part in Myanmar's remarkable growth.





# Families Reached by LIFT 2010-mid 2014







**The Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund  
UNOPS FUND MANAGEMENT OFFICE**

12(0), Pyi Thu Lane, 7 Mile,  
Mayangone Tsp, Yangon, Myanmar  
Phone: + 95 1 65 72 80~87,  
+95 1 65 77 02~04  
Fax: +95 1 65 72 79  
Email: [lift@unops.org](mailto:lift@unops.org)  
Website: [www.lift-fund.org](http://www.lift-fund.org)

---