

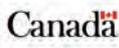


LIFT

ANNUAL REPORT 2019



Livelihoods and Food Security Fund



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DISCLAIMER

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THE LIVELIHOODS AND FOOD SECURITY FUND

UNOPS Fund Management Office

12(O) Pyi Thu Lane, 7 Mile, Mayangone Township, Yangon, Myanmar

Phone: +95 1 65 7280~87, Fax: +95 1 65 72 79

Email: lift@unops.org

lift-fund.org | facebook.com/liftfund

This report builds on LIFT's previous annual reports, which can be found at www.lift-fund.org/publications



ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADB

Asian Development Bank

CBO

Community-based Organisation

CSO

Civil Society Organisation

DAR

Department of Agricultural Research

DC

Donor Consortium

DoA

Department of Agriculture

DoF

Department of Fisheries

DRD

Department for Rural Development

DSW

Department of Social Welfare

FMO

Fund Management Office

FB

Fund Board

FDI

Foreign Direct Investment

FRD

Financial Regulatory Department

IDP

Internally Displaced Person

HH

Households

IP

Implementing Partner

LBVD

Livestock Breeding and Veterinary
Department

LEARN

Leveraging Essential Nutrition Actions To
Reduce Malnutrition project

MADB

Myanmar Agriculture Development Bank

MCCT

Maternal and Child Cash Transfer

MEAL

Monitoring and Evaluation for Accountability
and Learning

MFI

Microfinance Institution

MMK

Myanmar Kyat

MOALI

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and
Irrigation

MS-NPAN

Multi-sectoral National Plan of Action on
Nutrition

PoVAW

Prevention of Violence Against Women Law

UNOPS

United Nations Office for Project Services

VDC

Village Development Committee

WASH

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene



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**WORKING FOR INCLUSIVE AND
TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE**

WORKING FOR INCLUSIVE AND TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE

The multi-donor Livelihoods and Food Security Fund (LIFT) has operated in Myanmar for 10 years. Since 2010, LIFT has helped rural people to reach their full economic potential and resilience through improved nutrition, income diversification and skills development.

LIFT has supported the growth and modernisation of Myanmar's rural economy by increasing the profits of farmers, encouraging diversification in agriculture and skilling people for new jobs with higher wages; providing opportunities for smallholder farmers and landless people to participate in Myanmar's development.

A new phase of LIFT began in 2019.

In 2018, LIFT and its Fund Board examined evidence of Myanmar's changing rural economy and the situation in conflict-affected areas and explored evidence of opportunities to progress gender equality and women's empowerment and to build on nutrition, agriculture and decent work achievements.

LIFT's Fund Board committed to funding the next phase of LIFT 2019-2023 with programming that intensifies LIFT's focus on inclusion of the most vulnerable by a series of strategic shifts to:

- » Increase focus on inclusion and social cohesion
- » Intensify efforts on gender equality and women's empowerment
- » Increase geographical focus on ethnic/border states and conflict-affected areas
- » Bring internally displaced people and returnees into LIFT's development programmes

The programme design was guided by the Myanmar Government's strategic priorities as set out in their costed, prioritised sector plans. LIFT programming that began in 2019 is structured thematically rather than geographically as it was from 2010-2018. Geographic areas for implementation are prioritised in the four integrated programmes: Nutrition, Financial Inclusion, Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems and Decent Work and Labour Mobility. LIFT's cross-cutting work on policy, civil society

strengthening, gender and social protection continue. Each thematic area aims to contribute to changes at the policy, system and household/individual level.

The priority of LIFT's **Nutrition Programme** is to reduce stunting in children aged under five years by focussing on good nutrition in the First 1,000 Days. When addressed at scale good nutrition can transform economies. In Myanmar, one in three children below five years of age is stunted and the First 1,000 Days is a window of opportunity to ensure the good nutrition necessary for optimal growth, development and health throughout life. Since 2014, LIFT has established itself as a leader, coordinator and catalyst on improving nutrition in Myanmar. LIFT played a key role in supporting the Government's development of the Multi-Sectoral National Plan of Action for Nutrition (MS-NPAN) and piloted maternal and cash transfers in several areas of the country leading to the Government's ownership of a universal MCCT programme that includes conflict-affected areas and ethnic border regions in Myanmar. The Nutrition Programme that began in 2019 continues to support the MS-NPAN, the Government's MCCT programmes and intensifies the focus on nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive approaches that are proven to have a positive impact on nutrition outcomes of children, adolescents and women.

LIFT's **Financial Inclusion Programme** works to ensure that the most vulnerable people in villages and wards across the country, irrespective of their economic and social status, can benefit from a developing rural financial market. Despite substantial expansion of the financial sector since Myanmar's economy began opening in 2012, large sections of the population remain unserved or underserved. Socially responsible and inclusive financial services provide a wide range of benefits to individuals and the economy. LIFT's Financial Inclusion Programme's microfinance partners have had strong reach across Myanmar since 2014. Changes in the financial sector and the rapid rise of mobile phone ownership opened considerable opportunities to introduce savings and digital financial services. The Financial Inclusion Programme 2019-2023 continues to support microfinance institutions, including

expansion of the capital markets, expanding pro-poor financial services, mobilising savings, supporting agribusinesses and enabling the policy environment for inclusive, socially responsible financial services.

LIFT's **Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems Programme** 2019-2023 is explicitly seeking to address women's empowerment and gender equality as women often face difficulties accessing finance, market information, extension services and entering higher growth markets. The agricultural sector contributes approximately 30 per cent to gross domestic product, second only to the services sector in its contribution to economic growth. There is evidence of an 'agrarian transformation' occurring across the sector partly in response to the improved economic performance and opportunities that have emerged in the labour market.¹² While there is considerable potential for production and productivity gains in Myanmar's agriculture, fisheries and forestry, the sector faces numerous challenges. The Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems Programme adopts an inclusive value chain approach, engages with government, ethnic armed organisations, civil society and the private sector on land and natural resource management and contributes to improve nutritional outcomes through its focus on nutrition-sensitive agriculture.

From 2019, LIFT's **Decent Work and Labour Mobility Programme** shifts its approach to engage more broadly with establishing conditions for decent work within Myanmar's labour market, while maintaining a focus on internal and international migrants as some of the most vulnerable populations of workers. Myanmar's transition towards a more open and market-oriented economy is accelerating the mobility of workers between employment sectors and geographic locations. However, the rapid changes to the nature of employment in Myanmar have also brought significant challenges in ensuring fair working

conditions and preventing labour exploitation. Underpinning the programme's framework is the protection of fundamental labour rights as the cornerstone for building a foundation for decent work in Myanmar. The Decent Work and Labour Mobility Programme works to strengthen policy and legislation, enhance knowledge and stakeholder capacity and technical resources and provide women and men migrants and other vulnerable workers with greater access to information, training and services.

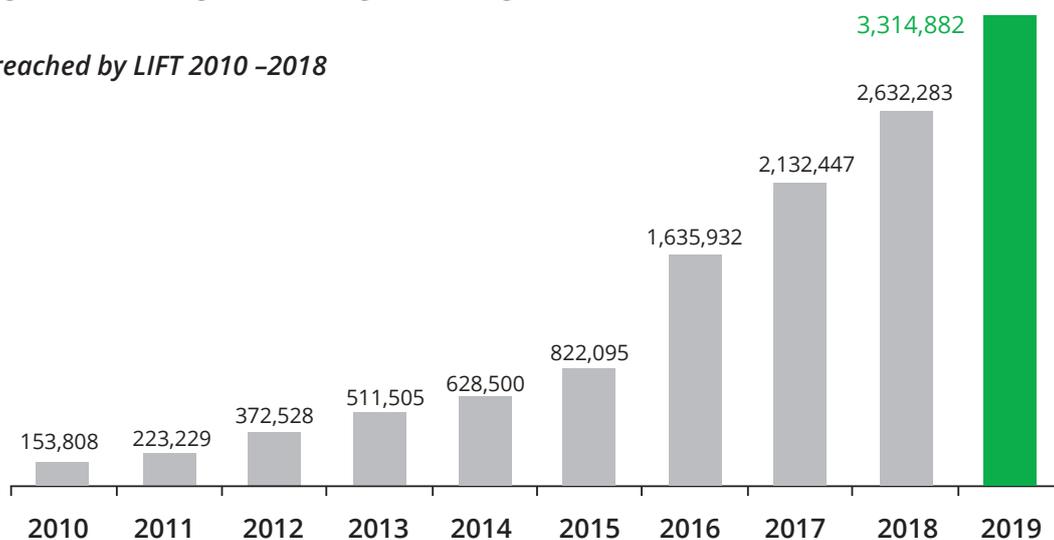
LIFT has intensified its focus on the most vulnerable in the **ethnic/border states and conflict-affected areas** in its 2019-2023 phase, integrating the LIFT programme interventions in these areas to support more sustainable and robust approaches to poverty and hunger reduction for communities in protracted crises and marginal areas; bring internally displaced persons and returnees into its development programmes by supporting the humanitarian development transition; contribute to improved nutritional outcomes; help displaced people secure jobs and income, and prevent exploitation, providing protection services to victims of trafficking and building cohesion with host communities.

LIFT support, amounting to USD 539 million, has reached around 14.5 million rural people, roughly 41 per cent of the country's rural population.

Projects are implemented by partners, who are local and international non-government organisations, UN agencies, civil society actors, academic and research bodies, and the private sector. LIFT provides technical support and guidance to the government of Myanmar.

The differentiated livelihoods strategy to help families across Myanmar to 'step up', 'step out' or 'hang in' remains a centrepiece of the LIFT's work in 2019-2023.

Families reached by LIFT 2010 –2018



1 ADB 2015. Myanmar: Unlocking the potential. A strategy for high, sustained and inclusive growth. ADB Economics Working Paper Series No. 437

2 Michigan State University, 'Agricultural mechanization and structural transformation in Myanmar's Ayeyarwady Delta', September 2016.



1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. LIFT continues to deliver good results

In 2019, LIFT met or exceeded 33 of the 39 indicators (84 per cent) for which data was collected. All eight of the policy outcome indicators were met or exceeded. Across LIFT's four new thematic programmes of Nutrition, Financial Inclusion, Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems, and Decent Work and Labour Mobility performance on the output indicators was good with most targets met or exceeded. Overall, performance of the nutrition system-level indicators was good and the Financial Inclusion Programme continued to perform well with nearly all targets met or exceeded. LIFT continues to support women, particularly through improved maternal nutrition, increased financial literacy and access to credit – 90 per cent of LIFT-supported financial services clients are women, and by reducing abuse and trafficking of women and children.

2. 2019 marked the tenth year for the Livelihood and Food Security Fund, with continued growth in numbers of people reached

In 2019, LIFT had worked in 269 townships, 82 per cent of Myanmar's townships. At the end of the year 14.5 million rural people – or roughly 41 per cent of Myanmar's rural population had been reached by LIFT. This represents a 26 per cent increase on the previous year. Growth in reach continues to be driven by LIFT-supported microfinance institutions that have been able to grow through LIFT's investment in jump-starting the microfinance capital market in Myanmar.

3. LIFT managed more projects in 2019 than ever before

LIFT managed 100 grants in 2019; 34 ended during the year as LIFT transitioned its programming under the 2019-2023 strategy. At the end of 2019, LIFT had 66 ongoing projects. LIFT worked with 65 partners in 2019. LIFT increased from USD 509 million at the end of 2018 to USD 539 million.

4. In 2019, LIFT transitioned to its 2019-2023 strategy, the fourth strategy cycle of LIFT. The 2019-2023 strategy intensifies LIFT's focus on inclusion of the most vulnerable.

From 2019, LIFT's focus is on inclusion and social cohesion, gender equality and women's empowerment, ethnic/border states and conflict-affected areas, internally displaced people and returnees, urban and peri-urban areas and support for the adoption and implementation of policies and reforms. The shifts in LIFT's focus meant a restructuring of programmes from geographic to thematic. In 2019, the Delta and Dry Zone programmes began to close out. Six calls for proposals/concept notes were issued in 2019 as LIFT built its thematic programmes. The integrated programmes continue to support food and nutrition security, livelihood development and social cohesion in the geographic areas prioritised by LIFT for 2019-2023.

5. LIFT's Nutrition Programme continued to support government nutrition initiatives that made significant progress in 2019.

Multi-Sector National Plan of Action on Nutrition (MS-NPAN) entered its inception phase with funding and technical support from LIFT, including support during sub-national planning workshops in states and regions that will lead to costed multi-sector nutrition plans in 2020. Since 2017, LIFT has supported the Department of Social Welfare's implementation of maternal and child cash transfer (MCCT) programme in Chin State. By the end of 2019, the government's contribution to MCCT had risen from almost zero in 2017 to USD 29 million, with a further USD 22 million committed for 2020. LIFT has helped leverage 2.4 times its investment in MCCT from government funds to a total of USD 51 million over three years. In 2019, DSW continued its MCCT expansion to Kayah and Kayin States. LIFT funded baseline surveys in both states in 2019. The Government's MCCT initiatives are informed by LIFT's delivery of MCCT programmes in Rakhine State, the Ayeyarwady Delta and Dry Zone since 2014. Each of these MCCT programmes piloted different modalities. In the Dry Zone a randomised control trial (RCT) was conducted to measure the impact of MCCT on health and nutrition outcomes of women and children, specifically testing the impact of social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) on nutrition outcomes. The RCT findings were published in 2019 and found a 4 per cent reduction in stunting in children aged 6-23 months whose mothers received cash transfers and SBCC. The completion of the RCT is an important milestone in building Myanmar's evidence base to inform the national MCCT programme. The RCT also contributes to the global evidence base, which supports the value of putting regular and timely cash transfers into the hands of women, alongside comprehensive measures to change behaviours and practices during the First 1,000 Days.

6. Increasing microfinance institutions' access to capital to increase access to financial services in Myanmar.

Financial inclusion is LIFT's largest programme. A more robust, inclusive rural financial market helps people take advantage of economic opportunities, build assets, generate employment, manage risks and reduce poor people's vulnerabilities to external shocks. In 2019, LIFT mobilised a second round of capital raising through the The Currency Exchange (TCX) swap market that hedges foreign exchange risks, allowing foreign investors to invest in Myanmar's microfinance institutions (MFI). LIFT's investment of USD 12 million is expected to deliver an estimated USD 198 million in private sector co-financing to MFIs, a leverage of 27 times. In 2019, 14 MFIs received investment from 28 investors as a result. At the end of 2019 LIFT had 28 financial inclusion partners (15 international MFIs, nine local MFIs, two credit cooperatives and two joint venture MFI companies) who reached 3.8 million clients (91 per cent are women). LIFT-supported microfinance institutions and Yoma Bank deliver deposit services, lines of credit, leasing, term-finance, debt consolidation loans, financing for seasonal crops, livestock, small businesses and customised loans for low-income women, migrants, people with disabilities and the internally displaced.

7. Most agriculture projects in the Delta and Dry Zone began to close out in 2019

as LIFT designed the new Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems Programme focused on an inclusive value chain approach for improving farmers' resilience and productivity, wide engagement to promote innovative approaches to land allocation and nutrition-sensitive agriculture to deliver improved nutrition outcomes. The final evaluations of projects that closed delivered learnings that are being used to design the Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems Programme that will be fully functional in 2020. With LIFT's shift in focus to the border regions of Myanmar, calls for proposals were launched focused on Chin, Kachin and northern Shan States and the South-East; agriculture, markets and food systems were included in these calls. A significant policy achievement in 2019 was the Government lifting the restrictions on foreign companies purchasing rice, pulses and maize on local markets for export in value added form. This is the most significant change in agricultural trade policy since rice export market liberalisation. The LIFT-funded Agri-food Value Chain Development in

Myanmar project (AVCD) advocated with the Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI) and the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) to allow foreign companies to purchase directly on local markets to: a) relieve liquidity constraints that lead to extremely low prices at harvest and b) facilitate export market diversification.

8. There were significant policy changes in 2019 relating to safe migration.

The Government lifted the ban on Myanmar's domestic workers migrating abroad and drafted legislation on labour protection for domestic workers. The International Labour Organization (ILO) is one of LIFT's partners in the Decent Work and Labour Mobility Programme and had advocated extensively for these changes, alongside civil society and labour organisations. The removal of the ban creates an opportunity to expand labour rights protection for domestic workers moving abroad so they can obtain safe and fair employment. Another of LIFT's partners, CARE, succeeded in incorporating gender sensitivity and sexual harassment in the newly adopted *Occupational Safety and Health Law* through direct advocacy with members of parliament. Other significant achievements of the Decent Work and Labour Mobility Programme related to dissemination of information on safe migration to migrants, their families and communities across Myanmar. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) disseminated its CHIME research conducted in 2018 in six cities, achieving good media coverage and government engagement. In 2019, BBC Media Action broadcast 10 episodes of their radio show on safe migration and financial management issues, reaching an estimated 3.2 million listeners. The radio programme's Facebook page doubled its reach to more than 750,000 people in more than 10 countries.

9. In 2019, LIFT set up new programmes in conflict-affected areas, in Kachin State, northern Shan State and in the South-East (Mon, Kayin and Kayah States and Tanintharyi Region) in line with LIFT's increased focus on conflict-affected areas, social cohesion and inclusion of displaced people and the most vulnerable.

LIFT's Kachin and northern Shan State programme comprises a package of integrated interventions that work in government- and non-government-controlled areas with relevant government and non-government service providers and is creating synergies with existing humanitarian and peace building initiatives. To develop the integrated programme in the South-East, LIFT conducted an extensive scoping mission and issued a call for concept notes, receiving 63 submissions. The full programme will be developed in 2020. During the first half of 2019, LIFT finalised the *Conflict Sensitivity Strategy and Action Plan* and updated the *Conflict Sensitivity Principles*, with the support of an external specialist consultant. The *LIFT Conflict Framework*³ outlines an approach to conflict sensitivity and conflict analysis that strengthens and complements existing LIFT practices.

In collaboration with the Access to Health Fund, LIFT engaged with RAFT, a specialised organisation that provides technical assistance to LIFT's Fund Management Office (FMO) and implementing partners (IP) on conflict-sensitive programming. LIFT's work in **Rakhine** State continued in 2019. Continued conflict is taking a heavy toll on the civilian population, with tens of thousands of people displaced across the affected townships of central and northern Rakhine and Paletwa Township in Chin State in 2019. Operational challenges increased as the security situation in several townships of central and northern Rakhine worsened, affecting granting of travel authorisations to areas where LIFT's funded work was programmed to expand the geographical reach. However, in 2019, LIFT reached 189,315 people in Rakhine State: 68 per cent Rakhine and 32 per cent Muslims.

³ <https://www.lift-fund.org/lift-conflict-framework>

10. Across LIFT in 2019, 207 policy events were convened and 78 publications were produced demonstrating substantial policy engagement over the year. There were 28 reported policy changes and eight changes in government budget allocations. In early 2019, LIFT took a significant step toward strengthening its capacity for policy engagement with the Government of Myanmar by recruiting a National Policy Officer (NPO) in Nay Pyi Taw in January 2019. The NPO focused primarily on establishing and strengthening relationships with key Parliamentary Committees in both the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament. LIFT convened several significant policy events with Members of Parliament (MPs) in Nay Pyi Taw. LIFT also embedded technical assistance in the Financial Regulatory Department and Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and Department of Social Welfare. LIFT and its IPs also made significant advances in policy engagement at the sub-national level, including state/regions and township levels.

11. From 2019, 20 per cent of LIFT's funding is ring-fenced for management by local entities. In 2019, the civil society organisations (CSO) supported by LIFT demonstrated increased engagement with local authorities; 64 per cent of the Uplands Township Fund report they have 'significantly increased' their engagement with, and recognition from, local authorities and community stakeholders. Their engagement with the private sector has also increased, delivering benefits to farmers through development of market linkages and exchange visits to learn about good agricultural practices.

12. Gender-responsiveness became a primary objective for LIFT under its refreshed strategy for the 2019-2023 phase and gender considerations intensified in 2019.

The women's empowerment in agriculture index (WEAI) was incorporated into LIFT's logframe and monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) plan and LIFT's monitoring and evaluation data sheets were updated to collect more gender-sensitive data from the projects and programmes in 2019. To ensure gender mainstreaming in new projects a minimum of 20 per cent of projects' budgets are allocated to gender mainstreaming to encourage gender-sensitive project design. An evaluation of LIFT's gender strategy was completed in 2019 and delivered recommendations for strengthening gender in LIFT's and partner's work. These will be implemented in 2020. A gender specialist was recruited in late-2019 to strengthen LIFT's capacity to provide technical support to programmes and projects.

13. LIFT increased its programming targeting people with disabilities in 2019. Four projects on disability across six states and regions were contracted. In 2019, 282 disability-inclusive community-based organisations (CBOs) were formed and supported across five states and regions (Chin, Kayin, Magway, Mandalay, Sagaing) by four of LIFT's implementing partners. The purpose of the organisations is to increase access for people with disabilities to social protection services.

14. The Government of the Union of Myanmar expanded its coverage of social pensions for the elderly during 2019 by 15 per cent. By December, almost 200,000 people aged over 85 years were receiving social pensions from the government. Since 2014, LIFT has funded HelpAge international to provide close technical support to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MSWRR) to help develop and implement the social pension programme, a key component of the government's National Social Protection Strategic Plan (NSPSP). This work continued in 2019.

LESSONS IDENTIFIED

In 2019, as **LIFT's Delta and Dry Zone** programmes began to close, a series of final evaluations were undertaken that provided learnings relevant for, and applied to, the design and implementation of integrated programmes in the 2019-2023 phase. Most notable of these are:

LIFT's partners' projects demonstrated that small- to medium-scale rice farmers can be supported to produce quality certified seed and make a profit. While the model of small-scale seed production works effectively, production is at limited scale and would require further external support to be replicated more widely. It is a relatively low-cost intervention and does represent good value for money, however it is not self-replicating and thus there are concerns about sustainability. Strengthening a unified seed grower association to support small-scale seed growers to supply foundation and registered seed to growers, conduct field inspections and seed testing, seed marketing, and engage in commercial negotiations with the private and public sectors (including contract seed farming) should be viewed as a means of addressing sustainability. LIFT is attempting to achieve this through the RSSD project and the emergence of the Ayeyarwady Seed Sector Platform.

There is a need for LIFT's partners to more actively promote private sector-led extension systems or develop hybrid models. Developing linkages with private sector input suppliers who demonstrate the benefits of their products to farmers was viewed as a missed opportunity in the Delta RISE Project. This is in part associated with preconceived skepticism and mistrust of the sector by some partners. In contrast, other partners actively engaged with the sector (IFDC, RSSD and Mercy Corp) with positive results.

Rice growing is only economically viable once economies of scale exist to ensure high productivity and bargaining power through organised farmers. The fact that most of the farmer organisations supported in the Delta were categorised as having very limited potential to become self-sustainable and scalable is not surprising given the ongoing processes of structural transformation, the challenging infrastructure environment, LIFT's initial approach on emergency relief and major efforts required to build robust and functional farmer organisations. Critical success factors to enable the organisations to become self-sustainable are to have sufficient organisational and management structures and to engage in legally registered and profitable business activities through joint collection and selling. Low margins are a significant challenge facing rice seed producers and farmers. Market prices are low and seed producers have limited access to good quality inputs and materials to upgrade their seeds. Limited coordination and connection with other private companies and facilitation by government makes it difficult for value chains to function properly and make it profitable for the farmer organisations and their members. When dealing with a low-value crop there are potentially two avenues that can be followed: value adding through processing to a high value product or diversification to other crops/livestock/aquaculture. In the Delta, diversification is probably the best approach because of the significant investments required for value adding.

Farmer organisations are currently not sustainable because of their low membership bases and limited capital. Lack of business vision is common among farmer organisations and is a major impediment to sustainability. Most farmer organisations operate informally, impeding their access to finance. A pre-requisite for self-sustainability are dedicated governance and ownership structures, committed, knowledgeable board members and staff who understand their role and can build and maintain trust with their member farmers. Further, there is a need for professional, salaried management in the value chain, which requires larger organisations than is evident in the 302 farmer organisations established.

The IFDC approach to building the capacity of input service providers (ISPs) to meet farmer needs and create linkages with DoA extension staff has proven to work in the delivery of extension services to farmers.

A key outcome of the Dry Zone project was the formation of the registered Cooperative Association of 53 ISPs who appreciate the advantages of working together to leverage prices for inputs. The association has a full-time CEO with the responsibility of growing the cooperative. This Cooperative Association has many of the elements that were lacking in the Delta farmer organisations and should be closely followed over the coming years.

Subsidies (cash, inputs etc.) should be used with caution and only to assist farmers overcoming risk thresholds, with a risk-sharing principle and after due diligence. Subsidies that are used from a purely supply driven starting point to convince farmers to do what the project proposes, on the pretext that they lack the investment capacity, will invariably generate distortions, fail to generate ownership in the worst-case scenario and attract people with hidden agendas.

Yield is the best predictor of gross margin, closely followed by price. Consequently, input costs do not influence gross margins as much as yield and price. However, using the right inputs at the right time will increase yield, and that will increase gross margins. The message for policymakers is to focus on technologies that increase yield and reward a high-quality product with a high farm-gate price.

The challenge for future donor interventions is to assist farmers in better application of the technologies to achieve the desired yields.⁴

Technological interventions may not always result in adoption and scalability. This was clearly evident in the small-scale hydroponic systems introduced under the TdH project.⁵ With low market prices for vegetables and the relative high cost of maintenance of these systems, the ability of households to continue managing them beyond the project is limited. **There is a need to clearly understand the contextual challenges that will enhance or limit an intervention when designing programmes and to ensure that this is considered in the projects' exit strategies.**

In late-2018, LIFT conducted a review of the project portfolio examining the extent to which LIFT and IPs had improved their nutrition-sensitive agriculture project designs over time. A number of past projects could have been nutrition-sensitive had they measured certain relevant outcomes or made project adaptations or additions. LIFT and partners have matured in their understanding and approaches to nutrition-sensitive agriculture resulting in a strengthened focus on nutrition-sensitive agriculture in LIFT's strategy and programmes. More partners are now linking agriculture and improved nutrition in their project rationales, theory of change models, and measurement frameworks.

⁴ IFDC. 2019. Final Report: Dry Zone Agro-Input and Farm Services Project.

⁵ TdH. 2019. Final Report: Soilless horticulture and other water-saving innovative technologies for landless and marginal farmers (SOW IT).

Findings from LIFT's migration programmes contributed to the design and start-up of LIFT's new thematic focus on Decent Work and Labour Mobility.**Building local research capacity is a more efficient and sustainable approach to strengthening the evidence-base for migration governance in Myanmar**

The final evaluation of the IOM CHIME project determined that it had produced an important piece of research on the migration-development nexus in Myanmar, but that the approach took an extended period of time and was very high cost. Much of this was attributed to engagement of an international academic institution to carry out the research and the international staff costs required for management of the study. Noting the need to continue to improve the evidence base for policy and legislation on labour migration in Myanmar in the long-term, LIFT has revised its strategic approach. The costed extension of the project has moved from reliance on international academics conducting research through local partners to a capacity building strategy that will be more cost-effective and sustainable in filling the need for migration research in Myanmar. A 'learning by doing approach' will improve the evidence base for migration governance through establishing a Migration Research Programme at the Myanmar Development Research Institute's Centre for Economic and Social Development, with technical support for organizational development provided by Australian National University.

Safe migration information for potential migrants and their family members must be designed to ensure accessibility for participants with low literacy levels

Effective communication is critical to improving understanding of migration-related information among potential migrants so that it can be used to make informed decisions that contribute to safer migration. However, much of the information regarding migration is written for a reading level beyond that of the target audience in many areas of Myanmar, especially among migrant family members from older generations. Responding to recommendations made in the mid-term review of the IOM MILDAS project about the need to revise the Benefitting from Migration training curriculum to better cater to the needs of participants with low literacy and numeracy skills, a consultant was commissioned with expertise in low literacy communications and training methods to review the curriculum. To improve comprehension and retention, several key adjustments were made, including development of materials with a greater amount of audio/visual content (including cartoons and videos), removal of all technical jargon from the training in favor of simplified language, inclusion of a 'Single Most Important Thing' to remember at the end of each module and ensuring high levels of participant engagement through the use of role-play, games and singing.

Targeting the structural causes of exploitation has a greater impact than focusing on individual victims and perpetrators

Millions of dollars in donor funding continue to be spent every year on efforts to combat human trafficking, particularly through improved criminal prosecution. Yet that expenditure often amounts to little, since it targets individual victims and criminals rather than addressing the structural factors that make exploitation possible. For example, rather than advocating for policy changes that would expand labour protection for hundreds of thousands of domestic workers, criminal cases are pursued against individual 'bad' employers who abuse the rights of domestic workers. This focus on victimhood and criminality can also serve to whitewash the root causes of migrant workers' vulnerability to exploitation, diverting attention away from more fundamental questions of economic and social justice. Instead of favouring small-scale isolated interventions that act as little more than a band-aid, structural factors need to be targeted in order to achieve more transformative changes. For example, the ILO DIILM project has worked to eliminate exploitation of domestic workers through ending the ban on migration of domestic workers abroad, adoption of laws and regulations to

protect the labour rights of domestic workers, establishing skills recognition systems and campaigning to change public attitudes. By building acceptance that domestic work is work – deserving of society's respect and the full protection of labour laws – exploitation of vulnerable workers can be reduced on a more meaningful scale.

Civil society and labour organisations have a key role to play in increasing access to justice for exploited migrant workers in Myanmar

Migrants are often reluctant to approach government authorities directly when they face labour rights abuses because they are intimidated by the legalistic and complex process. Through supporting the establishment of six Migrant Information Centres managed by CSOs and labour organisations, an increasing number of migrants have felt confident enough to make complaints. These trusted organisations provide the doorway that the majority of migrants prefer to walk through when they need legal assistance, particularly for women. In some cases, the Migrant Information Centres have dealt with these complaints directly; accompanying migrants to assist in negotiating settlement of disputes. In other cases, the grievances are referred to the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population complaint mechanism and Centre staff assist through regularly following up on the case. While the legal resolution of these cases is ultimately a responsibility of the Government, there is a critical role for CSOs and labour organisations to play in providing an access point and legal services for migrants to seek redress. In just six months of operation, over 1,800 migrants have lodged grievances at the Migrant Information Centers, clearly demonstrating the substantial and largely unmet demand for fair and responsive remedies among migrants.

With regards to policy, LIFT's Policy Unit identified a series of lessons identified during 2019 and these are presented in the policy chapter of this report.



2

RESULTS

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RESULTS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In 2019, LIFT transitioned to its new strategy 2019-2023, LIFT's fourth strategy cycle.

The monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) framework was refreshed for 2019-2023. The new MEAL framework builds on the achievements of the previous phase and responds to the key strategic shifts in the 2019-2023 strategy.

The MEAL framework is designed to serve the following three key interrelated functions:

1. **Accountability:** demonstrating the extent to which LIFT's investments are in line with its strategy and that key results are achieved efficiently, effectively and with good value for money
2. **Learning and adaptive management:** generating, sharing and using evidence about what works and what does not to improve performance and make course corrections
3. **Contribution to policy development:** generating and using policy- and practice-relevant evidence to inform government policies and the design and implementation of public programmes

These functions are underpinned by capacity support to ensure that MEAL tools, processes and products are of sufficient quality and are effective in supporting LIFT to achieve its accountability, learning/adaptive management and policy objectives.

The refreshed MEAL Framework is divided into three tiers: strategy, programmes and projects.

LIFT strategy: This level is focused on accountability, learning and policy across LIFT as a whole, with particular focus on the LIFT strategy. Key stakeholders at this level are the Government of Myanmar, the LIFT Fund Board, the LIFT Fund Management Office and key development partners. Emphasis at this level is on supporting the implementation of the LIFT MEAL strategy at the LIFT, programme and project levels.

LIFT programmes: This level is focused on how the thematic programmes contribute to LIFT's evidence-based accountability, learning/ adaptive management and policy objectives. Key stakeholders at this level include the LIFT programme teams and

implementation partners. Emphasis is placed on strengthening programme contribution to knowledge management.

LIFT projects: This level is focused on how projects contribute to their own and LIFT's evidence-based accountability, learning/ adaptive management and policy objectives. Emphasis is given to strengthening MEAL systems and practices at the project level for accountability and learning/ adaptive management. As the primary mechanism for LIFT to achieve its objectives, projects require strong MEAL systems that generate robust evidence to serve accountability, learning and adaptive management, and policy contribution at the project, programme and LIFT levels.

Across the MEAL framework's three levels the following key tools and processes apply:

Theory of change (ToC): Building on the experience of the previous phase with ToC the refreshed MEAL framework strengthens the use of ToC at all levels for learning and adaptive management.

Evaluation and learning studies: Building on LIFT's experience with evaluation and learning questions in the 2015-2018 strategy phase, the refreshed MEAL framework adopted a clearer demarcation between evaluation questions, learning questions and questions that are primarily intended to contribute to LIFT's policy objectives.

Measurement frameworks: Measurement frameworks define the key results and indicators that LIFT programmes and projects are expected to report against. Frameworks include the logframe that lists the results and their indicators, and includes targets and additional information on data sources, data collection tools, disaggregation of data and frequency of data collection among other relevant parameters as required.

The refreshed LIFT MEAL Framework was formally adopted at the end of 2019 paving the way for its operationalisation from 2020 onwards.

2.2 LIFT'S LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

A new logframe with 63 indicators was developed and approved by the Fund Board in mid-2019. Both the 2015-2018 logframe and the new logframe were operational in 2019. This was necessary to bridge the transition as many of LIFT's active projects in 2019 began in the 2015-2018 phase and were relevant to the new logframe.

The 63 indicators in the new logframe include: 11 purpose-level indicators and 52 programme-level indicators (26 outcomes and 26 outputs). The 11 purpose-level indicators measure LIFT's contribution to its goal and purposes as defined through the following impact-level outcomes:

- » Improved nutritional status, particularly of women and children - measured through household diet diversity, stunting, and minimum diet diversity
- » Increased household income and assets with greater control by women - measured through household poverty levels, income, asset ownership and women and men's control over assets and income
- » Reduced vulnerability of households and individuals to shocks stresses and risks - measured through prevalence of moderate and severe food insecurity, household resilience, vulnerability and informal employment in non-agricultural employment

The remaining 52 indicators measure changes at programme and project level. From 2019, LIFT has four thematic programmes that contribute to changes at the policy, system and household/individual level. The 52 indicators are distributed across the four thematic areas:

Nutrition: four policy indicators (two outcomes and two outputs); three system-level indicators (all outputs) and five household level indicators (all outcomes)

Financial inclusion: four policy indicators (two outcomes and two outputs); four system level indicators (all output levels) and five household indicators (all outcomes)

Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems: four policy indicators (two outcomes and two outputs); four system level indicators (all outputs) and five household level indicators (all outcomes)

Decent Work and Labour Mobility: four policy indicators (two outcome and two outputs); three systems indicators (all outputs) and seven household indicators (four outcome and three output)

Twenty-five indicators are carried forward from the previous strategy, nine are modified and 29 are new indicators. As with the previous strategies, all the 11

purpose-level and some programme-level indicators are measured through the LIFT household survey. The remaining 42 indicators rely on data from LIFT implementing partners.

2.3 DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

Household survey

LIFT conducts household surveys every two years to measure the purpose-level and some of the outcome indicators. In the year between household surveys, LIFT conducts tracker surveys with smaller sample sizes. Following the household survey in 2017, the next household survey was due to be conducted in 2019. The transition to the refreshed strategy and logframe as well as the reality that most active projects in 2019 began under the previous strategy (so many were coming to an end in 2019, a few would continue into 2020) required a review of approach and methodology, including of the household survey. Under the 2019-2023 strategy, LIFT also shifted its geographic focus to include new implementation areas and these changes required a review of the household survey methodology to ensure measurement of the indicators for 2019 and relevant baseline values for the 2019-2023 phase.

In 2019, LIFT FMO undertook a comprehensive review of the household survey methodology and consulted extensively with the Fund Board and Fund Management Office to decide that the 2019 survey would need to report on LIFT's logframe indicators, measure women's empowerment using the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index, measure poverty using the Poverty Probability Index and include a short expenditure module. Because most intervention villages for new programming were not yet identified and given the large sample size and resource requirements of a regional representative survey it was decided to keep the 2019 survey representative of LIFT intervention areas, which is sufficient for logframe reporting purposes. A larger scale survey, both nationally and regionally representative, would follow in 2020.

Government approvals for the survey were obtained just as the Government of Myanmar rolled out comprehensive COVID-19 prevention measures that included restrictions on movement in a number of states, thus making the completion of the household survey impossible. The consequence of this is that data cannot be collected for 21 indicators: 11 purpose-level and eight outcome indicators that were earmarked for the household survey. One new nutrition system-level indicator and one financial inclusion indicator was added to the household survey and are therefore not reported on.

A further challenge of this transition year is that most projects implemented during this reporting period are carried over from the previous strategy

phase (and therefore started implementation and reporting during a different logframe for LIFT). While some closed during the year others are expected to continue beyond 2019. This inevitably presented challenges for implementing partners in reporting on some of the new and modified indicators particularly at outcome levels.

The purpose-level indicators not measured or reported in 2019 are:

- I-1.1 %/# of households in LIFT areas with an acceptable household dietary diversity score
- I-1.2 % of moderately/ severely stunted children under 5 years in LIFT areas
- I-1.3 % of women of reproductive age (15-49 years) in LIFT areas achieving minimum dietary diversity
- I-2.1 % of households in LIFT areas below the international extreme poverty line
- I-2.2 %/# of households in LIFT areas with increased income
- I-2.3 %/# of households in LIFT areas with increased asset ownership
- I-2.4 % of male-headed households in LIFT areas in which women report at least equal control over assets and income
- I-3.1 Prevalence of moderate and severe food insecurity in LIFT areas, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)
- I-3.2 %/# of people in LIFT areas whose resilience has been improved and ability to cope has increased
- I-3.3 %/# of households in LIFT areas categorised as vulnerable
- I-3.4 % of informal employment in non-agriculture employment in LIFT areas

The outcome indicators not measured or reported in 2019 are:

- NH-1.1 % of children under 6 months in LIFT areas who are exclusively breastfed
- NH-1.2 % of children 6-23 months in LIFT areas with minimum adequate acceptable diet
- NH-1.3 %/# of households in LIFT areas using (a) safely managed sanitation services and (b) a hand-washing facility with soap and water

NH-1.4 %/# of households in LIFT areas using improved drinking water, which is available on premises (modified)

NH-1.5 % of women who are involved in child health & nutrition decisions individually or jointly (modified)

FH-1.4 % of individual households receiving LIFT supported financial services moving out of extremely poor/poor to near poor status over the last twelve months

FH-2.1 %/# of households with women reporting equal or greater control over LIFT supported credit and savings

AH-2.1 #/% of women in LIFT-supported households reporting equal or greater access, control and decision-making regarding agricultural production and related income - LIFT HH Survey (WEAI)

DH-2.4 % of employed individuals in a situation of forced labour within LIFT target areas (modified)

NS-1.3 %/# of households in LIFT areas reporting year round availability of drinking water from improved water sources on premise

Data reported by implementing partners

LIFT's implementing partners (IP) report on 17 outcome and 25 output indicators for LIFT's logframe. LIFT is able to report on all these indicators for 2019, except two outcome indicators; AH 1-3 due to complexity of measurement at the IP level, FP- 2.1 which was not targeted for measurement by the FI team in 2019, and one output indicator DS-1.2 which was dropped.

The outcome indicators measured with IP data seek to capture intermediate changes resulting from a broad range of IP interventions. For example, training activities focusing on good agricultural practices, enterprise and vocational skills would be measured by the number and percentage of adopters, those who establish enterprises or secure employment as the immediate outcomes.

Output-level reporting is essentially based on reach attained through the various activities. Data on these indicators is reported every six months by IPs. LIFT's standard reporting sheet was modified in 2019 to capture additional levels of desegregation including age groups, categories and levels of disability, beneficiary occupations and geographical locations. IPs receive a user manual and training on how to complete the reporting sheets. In 2019, IPs were introduced to the refreshed logframe indicator reference sheets, which provide detailed guidance on the measurement of the indicators. However,

the indicator reference sheets were only finalised in the fourth quarter of 2019, just before the reporting cycle began. Training of IPs on the indicator reference sheets will continue in 2020. It is expected that additional resourcing will be provided to enable IPs to conduct surveys and studies that are required for measurement of the outcome indicators.

LIFT follows the following process to review and verify IP data:

- » IP data is first submitted to LIFT thematic programmes for review and quality checking focusing on accuracy in aggregations, completeness and double counting.
- » Verified data is submitted to the thematic M&E officers for further review, which focuses on consistency with the narrative reports.
- » Verified data is then submitted to the LIFT Data Management Officer for entry into the LIFT database and final quality checks and aggregation is completed to establish achievement levels as per the indicator measures.
- » Once data has been verified in the LIFT database, the final activity and indicator data reports are produced and submitted to the LIFT MEAL specialists for final reporting.

Fund Management Office

A few of LIFT activities reported on in the logframe, including policy engagement on some issues across the four thematic areas and support to civil society, are undertaken by LIFT's Fund Management Office

(FMO). Data from these activities is collated by the FMO teams and incorporated into the relevant indicators. A wide range of evaluations and special studies commissioned every year contribute to LIFT-wide learning, case studies, and insights that are reflected in programme narrative reports.

Reporting

Reported data includes cumulative achievements from 2010 to 2019 to indicate LIFT's overall progress over the full period of LIFT's work. For all the new and modified indicators, achievement for previous years is not available (N/A) as they are being measured for the first time (in the case of new indicators) or the available data is not adequate (in the case of modified indicators). Subsequent columns detail the specific achievements of the current year, and notes the milestones originally set and percentages of targets achieved. Given that the household survey was not undertaken in 2019, reported achievements mirror direct reach by the IPs through the various activities undertaken.

A distinction is maintained between the 'core' LIFT programming areas where LIFT's geographic, financial inclusion and other programmes are implemented, and the areas where only financial inclusion activities take place. The 'core' programme areas are known as Tier 1 and the financial inclusion only areas are known as Tier 2. To avoid double counting, the total reach for 2019 is based on Tier 2 reach, which is 3,295,040 households.

Table 2.1: Programme-level NP-1 indicators and achievements

| Indicator | Achievement | Achievement | Cumulative Achievement | Cumulative Milestone | Per cent Achieved | Data source |
|---|-------------|-------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| | 2010-2018 | 2019 | 2010-2019 | 2019 | | |
| NP-1.1 # of changes to nutrition related public sector policies and programmes supported by LIFT | 3 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 1.13 | Programme/ IPs |
| NP-1.2 # of changes in nutrition related public sector budget allocation/ spending supported by LIFT | 1 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 1.67 | Programme/ IPs |
| NP-1.3 # of LIFT supported nutrition related policy-oriented events organised | 15 | 33 | 48 | 15 | 3.2 | Programme/ IPs |
| NP-1.4 # of LIFT supported nutrition related policy-oriented publications provided to key policy makers | 10 | 8 | 18 | 20 | 0.9 | Programme/ IPs |

2.4 LIFT'S INDICATOR RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Programme-level indicators, results and achievements

Nutrition - Policy Level

NP-1: New and/or improved gender-responsive public sector policies, programmes, and expenditure that support:

- » Implementation of the MS-NPAN including SBCC for MCCT & MIYCF, IMAM scale-up, food fortification, and the ADS nutrition-sensitive agriculture component.
- » Increased sub-national support for the implementation of the MS-NPAN
- » Implementation of National Social Protection Strategic Plan (NSPSP) including MCCT, social pensions, people with disabilities

NP-1.1 # of changes to nutrition-related public sector policies and programmes supported by LIFT

Key policy achievements under this indicator revolved around providing support to the Government's maternal and child cash transfers (MCCT) programme and the Multi-sector National Plan of Action for Nutrition (MS-NPAN). LIFT's support ensured that the Government of Myanmar continued to expand the delivery of the MCCT programmes across various states and regions. In Kayin State, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MSWRR) expanded its outreach capacity at the township level by deploying new case managers for programme delivery and by assigning an MCCT Assistant Director to the state team for programme supervision and coordination.

LIFT FMO engaged with key government stakeholders at national and state/regional levels as part of its continued advocacy and support towards the rollout of the MS-NPAN. For example, the LIFT-FMO organised a MS-NPAN sub-national planning workshop in Patheingyi in July 2019 to support the regional government in designing the Ayeyarwady Region's plan. Based on lessons from this pilot exercise in Patheingyi, LIFT supported a series of sub-national planning workshops in Kayah, Chin, Kayah and southern Shan States. At these workshops, sub-national-level policies and programmes were updated with the support of national guidelines from the MS-NPAN. Another positive outcome of the LIFT-organised sub-national MS-NPAN workshop in Patheingyi was that government officers from participating departments requested the involvement of General Administration Department (GAD) in the MS-NPAN process, recognising the crucial role of GAD in coordination and decision-making at regional and township levels.

Through its partner, Help Age International, LIFT supported the updating of the Costed Social Protection Sector plan (2018-2023). This has since been approved and accepted by the Development Assistance Coordination Unit (DACU) and is available in Myanmar and English. The plan is now accessible for all stakeholders involved in the social protection sector.

NP-1.2 # of changes in nutrition-related public sector budget allocation/ spending supported by LIFT

Key achievements were realised under this indicator during the reporting period in the following two areas:

Maternal and child cash transfers (MCCT): LIFT's total investment in MCCT from 2014 to the end of 2019 was USD 21.3 million. The Government's financial contribution to the MCCT began in 2017. Government budget allocation to MCCT has risen in just two years from almost zero to USD 29 million, with a further USD 22 million committed for 2020. Based on MCCT programme outcomes, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MSWRR) expanded its public finance budget for new MCCT programmes in Ayeyarwady Region and Shan State in the 2019-2020 fiscal year. The Ministry committed to continue its budget support for all MCCT programmes in Chin, Rakhine, Naga, Kayah and Kayah States in the 2019-2020 fiscal year. Over three years, government contributions have amounted to USD 51 million and there is strong indication that further funding will be committed in future years; Kachin State being the next target area.

Social Pensions: HelpAge International reported that MSWRR secured an increased allocation for social pensions from the national budget for the 2019-2020 fiscal year (October 2019 to September 2020) as the national social pension beneficiary numbers increased by 15 per cent from 168,578 in December 2018 to 197,593 in December 2019, mainly due to a decrease in the age of eligibility from 90 to 85. As a result, funding for social pensions increased from USD 14.4 million in the 2018-2019 fiscal year to USD 16.9 million in the 2019-2020 fiscal year; an increase in funding of more than USD 2 million.

NP-1.3 # of LIFT-supported, nutrition-related policy-oriented events organised

In 2019, LIFT, through the FMO and its implementing partners, recorded significant achievements organising and promoting policy events to support the realisation of nutrition outcomes. The overachievement of the target is mainly due to the direct support that LIFT provided to the MS-NPAN, with a dedicated team based in Nay Pyi Taw and working directly with the National Nutrition Centre

(NNC) of the Ministry of Health and Sports (MoHS). The support to the MS-NPAN required the organisation of several events and meetings, at national and sub-national levels for the implementation of the inception phase and its three work streams. Another partner that contributed significantly to the achievement of this indicator was PATH through their fortified rice project. With 2019 being the last year of the project's implementation, the project dedicated most of its efforts to the development of an exit strategy that envisaged the handover of the fortified rice initiative to the Government and specifically to the NNC. Given the positive experience with rice fortification through this project, NNC expanded the scope of this work to develop a broader food fortification strategy for Myanmar. Several events and meetings were organised with government representatives and relevant stakeholders for this purpose.

LIFT's continued support to the Department of Social Welfare's MCCT programme and its expansion in Kayah and Kayin States also led to the organisation of several policy-related events. With a renewed focus on the development of the social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) strategy for the MCCT programme meetings and workshops were organised to finalise and endorse the SBCC Strategy/Action Plan for Chin, which will be adapted and replicated in Kayah and Kayin States. More examples of LIFT's nutrition IPs policy work is detailed in the Nutrition chapter of this report.

Below are some examples of events organised by LIFT or its partners in 2019:

SUN CSA: The national and regional advocacy efforts of the Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Alliance (SUN CSA), funded by LIFT through its implementing partners Save the Children and World Vision, were advanced through engagement with parliamentarians and the media. SUN CSA met with parliamentarians in February 2019 and again at a follow up workshop in June in Patheingyi. With support from the National Steering Committee and the Secretariat, the Steering Committee from the Ayeyarwady Regional SUN CSA led the consultation workshop with Ayeyarwady Region parliamentarians, who expressed their interest in supporting increased production and consumption of diverse foods, appropriate use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides, promoting awareness on systematic usage of agrochemicals and enforcing the implementation of laws related to importing food products.

Maternal and Child Cash Transfers (MCCT): As part of the institutional capacity strengthening plan, the second workshop focusing on lessons learned from the Chin MCCT was organised by the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) in June 2019. To support knowledge-sharing with other MCCT programmes, 46 representatives from Chin, Rakhine, Naga, Kayah and Kayah participated in the workshop. The DSW-

led Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) Committee and the MoHS's Health and Literacy Promotion Unit (HLPU)-led SBCC Working Group reviewed the Chin MCCT SBCC Strategy and developed State Action Plans for Kayah and Kayah for the rollout of SBCC-related activities, including nutrition education sessions for programme beneficiaries, to maximise the impact of cash transfers. Subsequently, the SBCC activities were rolled out in Chin, Kayah and Kayah States. The SBCC Committee also decided to use the government-endorsed community infant and young child Feeding (C-IYCF) curriculum and accompanying tools as the guide for SBCC field activities in all states and regions.

NP-1.4 # of LIFT-supported, nutrition-related, policy-oriented publications provided to key policy makers

A number of policy-oriented publications were developed by LIFT implementing partners DSW, Save the Children and HelpAge International and shared with key policy makers in 2019.

A Randomised Control Trial (RCT) report for the LEGACY Project, implemented by Save the Children to reduce stunting among children in Myanmar's Central Dry Zone, was published. The RCT, which was designed to measure the causal impact of the MCCT on health and nutrition outcomes among target beneficiaries during the First 1,000 Days, involved those who received cash only, those who received cash plus SBCC interventions, and a control group where no programme activities took place. The four percentage point reduction in stunting among children whose mothers received cash plus SBCC, compared to those who received cash only, was a critical finding that illustrated the importance of complementing cash transfer programmes with SBCC interventions to promote behavioural change to achieve maximum positive nutrition outcomes. Another crucial learning was the value of ensuring coverage for the children throughout the entire First 1,000 Days period, as those children who were exposed to the intervention for a longer period of time fared best.

Save the Children's TEAM MCCT Project, which provides technical support to the DSW's MCCT programme in Chin State, produced two reports during this period on Chin post-distribution monitoring and lessons learned from MCCT programming. The reports led to adaptation of DSW's programme implementation.

In 2019, HelpAge International published *Roles and Responsibilities in Social Protection in Myanmar: The Case of Social Pensions*, which presented analysis of challenges and opportunities that exist at sub-national levels in developing and delivering social protection schemes, particularly social pensions.

Nutrition - Systems Level

NS-1: Increased quality and coverage of nutrition interventions

NS-1.1 # of individuals reached with LIFT-supported, nutrition-specific interventions

NS-1.1 is a new indicator that measures the number of individuals reached with LIFT supported nutrition-specific interventions. Nutrition-specific interventions address the immediate causes of malnutrition, which are inadequate dietary intake and disease. Examples of nutrition-specific interventions are micronutrient supplementation or fortification, deworming, treatment of acute malnutrition, promotion of breastfeeding and complementary feeding, promotion of positive feeding behaviours, and maternal dietary supplementation, including targeted social and behaviour change communication related to the above interventions. **Only women of reproductive age, adolescent girls and children under 5 years of age can contribute to this indicator if they are directly targeted**, i.e. a) the intervention is intended to reach them specifically, b) the project includes a component to actively promote the uptake of intervention(s) by these groups, and (c) the uptake is monitored in some way.

Reported achievements under this indicator are mainly attributed to project activities undertaken by LIFT partner Save the Children International, which contributed to over 90 per cent of the achievement for this indicator. Catholic Relief Services and the

Consortium of Dutch NGOs and their respective partners also contributed to this indicator. LIFT partners significantly outperformed the target, which was based on projected funding and estimated percentage of funding going towards nutrition-specific programming. However, Save the Children was able to reach a higher than anticipated number of beneficiaries through its community-based mother support group model; with an extensive training network to build the capacity of community volunteers to lead sessions. Attendance at these support group sessions was one of the soft conditions for receiving a cash transfer, and contributed to the high reach.

Save the Children International: Save the Children's activities were implemented under TEAM- MCCT, LEGACY, Tat Lan Plus and Bright SUN projects.

Under the TEAM-MCCT project, Save the Children in partnership with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Danish Red Cross (DRC) provided technical assistance to the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) to ensure coordinated implementation of social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) activities alongside maternal and child cash transfers in Chin State. Key SBCC activities included the delivery of nutrition, health, and hygiene activities by basic health staff (BHS) and community health volunteers (CHVs), which include auxiliary midwives (AMW) and community health workers (CHW), to targeted members of the community benefitting from cash transfers. TEAM MCCT staff together with government midwives conducted 523 cooking competitions and 521 nutrition promotion games

Table 2.2 Programme-level NS-1 indicators and achievements

| Indicator | Achievement | Achievement | Cumulative Achievement | Cumulative Milestone | Per cent Achieved | Data source |
|---|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| | 2010-2018 | 2019 | 2010-2019 | 2019 | | |
| NS-1.1 # of individuals reached with LIFT supported nutrition specific interventions | N/A | 40,122, 40,122 F | 40122 40,122 F | ⁶ 9796[1] | 4.1 | IPs |
| NS-1.2 # of individuals reached with LIFT supported nutrition sensitive interventions | ⁷ N/A[2] | 151992 131,389 F 20,603 M | 151992 131,389 F 20,603 M | ⁸ 147,978[3] | 1.03 | IPs |

6 Target was originally submitted as 12,489, however it was revised down using a cost calculation. We assumed 15% of dedicated nutrition funding would go towards nutrition-specific programming. These figures are for direct beneficiaries only (in the case of nutrition-specific, eligible beneficiaries include pregnant and breastfeeding women, women of reproductive age, children under 5, adolescent girls). Cost per beneficiary was calculated using average project data from select projects at the time that targets were set. The estimated cost per beneficiary for nutrition-specific projects based on select project data was USD 191. The cost calculation and target will need to be updated with new project data and a better estimation of the percentage of budget dedicated to nutrition-specific interventions.

7 540,803 was the cumulative achievement (2010-2018) of a previous LIFT indicator, PR 5.1: Number of LIFT households reached with nutrition sensitive information.

8 610,246 was submitted as a cumulative milestone for 2019 based on a projection of a target achievement of 70,000 individuals reached in 2019 added to the 540,000 cumulative achievement for 2010-2018 under PR 5.1 (previous indicator). However, the Nutrition team preferred a higher target milestone of 147,987 for NS 1.2 (new indicator) in 2019. Additional details regarding new projections for 2020-23 will be separately presented to the Fund Board.

in every township. Mother support group sessions were led by 861 of the trained 924 facilitators, which means that 93 per cent of trained facilitators were actively leading sessions, compared to 59 per cent in 2018. The facilitators, who are responsible for the delivery of the monthly lessons, include both BHS and CHVs. A total of 3,736 sessions were achieved during this reporting period, far surpassing achievements in 2018. Cumulatively, TEAM-MCCT reached a total of 25,302 female beneficiaries the delivery of nutrition, health, and hygiene activities by basic health staff (BHS) and community health volunteers (CHVs), which include auxiliary midwives (AMW) and community health workers (CHW), to targeted members of the community benefitting from cash transfers. TEAM MCCT staff together with government midwives conducted 523 cooking competitions and 521 nutrition promotion games in every township. Mother support group sessions were led by 861 of the trained 924 facilitators, which means that 93 per cent of trained facilitators were actively leading sessions, compared to 59 per cent in 2018. The facilitators, who are responsible for the delivery of the monthly lessons, include both BHS and CHVs. A total of 3,736 sessions were achieved during this reporting period, far surpassing achievements in 2018. Cumulatively, TEAM-MCCT reached a total of **25,302 female beneficiaries.**

The **Consortium of Dutch NGOs (CDN)** Improving the Incomes and Nutrition Outcomes of Rural Poor in Northern Kayin State project conducted monthly mother-to-mother group sessions and weight monitoring of children aged under five in their project villages. Feedback reports indicate that group members showed particular interest in certain topics, including three main food groups, exclusive breastfeeding and infant and young child feeding. CDN reported that 75 per cent of mother leaders could provide mother-to-mother sessions independently without project staff, which is a good achievement considering the intervention area's low level of education and literacy rates. Participation in monthly weight measurements increased and most children under five in the project village were being weighed. CDN collaborates with Medical Action Myanmar for referrals of severely malnourished children to support their recovery.

NS-1.2 # of individuals reached with LIFT-supported, nutrition-sensitive interventions

This indicator was added to measure the number of unique individuals reached with LIFT-supported,

nutrition-sensitive interventions through any direct channel. Nutrition-sensitive interventions are those that address the underlying and basic causes of undernutrition.⁹ To qualify as nutrition-sensitive interventions, according to LIFT's definition, projects must have an explicit aim to improve nutrition in some way and must track the achievement of nutrition outcomes. While a wider population group might benefit from nutrition-sensitive projects, the target population for this indicator is women of reproductive age, adolescent girls and children aged under five, as they are globally regarded as nutritionally vulnerable. Those who are targeted as key influencers also may be counted towards this indicator if programme activities are directed towards supporting them to facilitate the target population's adoption of positive behaviours.¹⁰

The reported achievement of 151,992 beneficiaries is based on LIFT's support to nutrition-sensitive programming, particularly in the social protection and agriculture sectors. LIFT's support to MCCT programmes undertaken by DSW and other partner organisations in various regions contributes most significantly to the achievement of this indicator.

The reported achievement of 151,992 beneficiaries is based on LIFT's support to nutrition-sensitive programming, particularly in the social protection and agriculture sectors. LIFT's support to MCCT programmes undertaken by DSW and other partner organisations in various regions contributes most significantly to the achievement of this indicator.

DSW'S MCCT Programme: The Department of Social Welfare's MCCT programme implemented in Chin State includes the distribution of cash transfers, alongside a SBCC approach and institutional capacity strengthening, aimed to improve the nutritional outcomes for women and children in the First 1,000 Days of life. By December 2019, the programme reached its third year of implementation with a total of 33,128 beneficiaries registered since the start of the intervention in June 2017. Five rounds of cash were transferred during 2019 to the registered beneficiaries (33,128). Of these, 7,252 were newly registered cash recipients in 2019. As this is a new indicator, all 33,128 registered beneficiaries were counted in the achievement of this indicator in 2019. Although the DSW began implementing the MCCT Programme in Kayah State by October 2018, the LIFT operational grant to DSW commenced from February 2019. By December 2019, DSW transferred five rounds of cash to 10,647 registered beneficiaries.

⁹ Underlying and basic causes, according to the UNICEF causal framework for malnutrition, include household food insecurity, inadequate social and care environment, unhealthy environment, poor access to health care, inadequate access to food, income poverty, lack of political stability, limited access to education, gender inequality, lack of financial/physical/human/social/natural capital, etc.

¹⁰ These key influencers may include fathers, grandmothers, community leaders, health workers, or others who can be intentionally supported to positively influence the behaviours of women of reproductive age, adolescent girls, and children under 5 years of age. In order for individuals to be included in the achievement of this indicator, the intervention must be intended to reach those individuals specifically; the project must include a component to actively promote the uptake of intervention(s) by these groups, and the uptake must be monitored in some way.

The Kayin MCCT program also started from October 2018, with the LIFT operational grant commencing from February 2019. By December 2019, DSW transferred five rounds of cash to 40,791 registered beneficiaries. In 2019, DSW's nutrition-sensitive cash transfers reached a total of 84,566 beneficiaries (all women).

Save the Children Nutrition Projects: Save the Children nutrition projects (TEAM MCCT, LEARN, LEGACY, Tat Lan Plus and BRIGHT SUN) reached a combined total of 51,072 (39,120 female). Team MCCT contributed to this indicator through nutrition training provided to key influencers of the target population and community volunteers. Community Nutrition Champions (including community leaders) were identified as part of the grassroots structure to sustain community mobilisation campaigns, which Save the Children is also running to complement the behaviour change work that LIFT-funded projects are implementing. A total of 7,326 beneficiaries were reached through these activities. Save the Children's Tat Lan Plus project reached a total of 16,047 beneficiaries through its activities, which included community cooking demonstrations, social behaviour change training to mothers, fathers and key influencers. BRIGHT SUN reached a total of 18,623 beneficiaries and the LEGACY Project reached 8,923 beneficiaries in 2019 through nutrition-sensitive maternal and child cash transfers. In 2019, the Legacy project delivered its final cash transfers, as the project ended in April. Over the life of the project, Legacy enrolled 11,588 women to receive cash transfers through its three different MCCT models. Although the LEARN Project did not contribute a high number of beneficiaries towards this indicator (153 individuals), they built the capacity of government volunteers and staff, as well as LIFT IPs to deliver nutrition-sensitive programming.

CRS-Productive Agriculture Through Community Engagement (PACE) Project: Contributing to LIFT's nutrition-sensitive agriculture efforts, the PACE Project conducted demonstration home gardening sessions on sowing vegetables, water and pest management, seed saving, and cultivating a variety of healthy vegetables. Training sessions targeted mothers of children aged under two and pregnant and breastfeeding women. The sessions contributed to an average of 6.8 nutritious vegetables grown in the dry season, an increase from 2.7 at the baseline. By the project's endline, 40 per cent of households were able to harvest nutritious vegetables for an average of 3.4 months out of the dry season, more than double the 1.4 months reported at baseline. Because PACE had a stated nutrition objective to improve the dietary diversity of mothers and children 6-23 months, and the project tracked nutrition outcomes, these PACE beneficiaries are therefore eligible to be counted as individuals benefiting from nutrition-sensitive agriculture interventions. CRS reached a total of 1,168 beneficiaries (656 women) in 2019.

CDN: conducted nutrition and behaviour change communication training for nutrition health technicians and conducted quarterly nutrition community awareness sessions in 2019. Key messages delivered related to consuming foods from the three main food groups, practicing exclusive and continued breastfeeding, how to appropriately practice complementary feeding for children aged under two, and the basics of maternal nutrition. The results of pre-and post-tests show that 71 per cent of participants improved their nutrition knowledge. The project was also able to successfully engage men and promote the idea that nutrition is a shared responsibility for women and men.

Other organisations that implemented nutrition-sensitive activities include The Border Consortium, World Fish, Myanmar Institute for Integrated Development (MIID), HelpAge International, CORAD and Golden Pearl. While Koe Koe Tech's Shwe Maymay project, World Food Programme's Scaling up Fortified Rice Production and Consumption throughout Myanmar project, and PATH's national Introduction of Fortified Rice in Myanmar project, all reached high numbers of beneficiaries in 2019 and contributed towards nutrition improvements in Myanmar, they did not track the nutrition outcomes of individuals. Therefore, they did not meet the LIFT definition of nutrition-specific or nutrition-sensitive and were not included in NS 1.1 or NS-1.2's achievement. PATH's project reported reaching 3,326,384 households in 2019 while Koe Koe Tech reported distributing its App to 153,945 individuals. The World Food Programme reached 53,791 individuals through the distribution of fortified rice among internally displaced families in Rakhine. As NS 1.1 and 1.2 are new indicators, the FMO will work with LIFT partners in the future to ensure that as many relevant interventions as possible support the achievement of these indicators. It is important to note, however, that although these projects' beneficiaries may not be included in NS 1.1 or NS 1.2, the projects contribute towards a number of other nutrition and policy-related indicators in the logframe.

Financial Inclusion - Policy Level

FP-1: New and/or improved gender-responsive public sector policies, programmes, and expenditure that:

- » Support FRD's examination and supervision of MFIs
- » Support MoPF's implementation of the National Savings Mobilisation Policy
- » Support the revision of micro-insurance regulation and practice to better serve MFI clients

FP-1.1 # of changes to financial inclusion- related public sector policies and programmes supported by LIFT

Achievements under this indicator were realised through the policy engagement activities undertaken by LIFT's FMO. LIFT's financial inclusion team supported the Financial Regulatory Department (FRD), Ministry of Planning and Finance and Industry, to reduce the interest rate burden in the microfinance sector through policy working group meetings at the national level and the Myanmar Microfinance Association. As a result, FRD issued directives for a new interest rate policy that reduced interest rates on loans from 30 per cent to 28 per cent. At the same time, the floor for the interest rate on compulsory saving was reduced to 14 per cent. FMO also drafted one directive on hire purchase loans, which was shared with Asian Development Bank (ADB) consultants. It was suggested by the Director General that FMO and ADB consultants jointly discuss and finalise the draft directive. FMO suggested inputs on the updated version of the new *Microfinance Law* to FRD through the Myanmar Microfinance Association (MMFA). LIFT's financial inclusion team also participated in policy working group meetings with MMFA and provided inputs to FRD to improve existing Myanmar microfinance

laws. The *Microfinance Law* is being revised by adding inputs from the microfinance policy working group as well as getting public consensus. The law is expected to provide a set of guidelines that will facilitate sound financial management practices to safeguard the interest of clients.

FP-1.3 # of LIFT-supported, financial inclusion-related, policy-oriented events organised

All the policy-oriented activities reported under this indicator were undertaken by LIFT's Fund Management Office. A significant proportion of these activities involved provision of capacity support to FRD to strengthen the financial management systems and reporting. Other events involved policy engagements with Union and State/Regional government authorities focusing largely on strengthening public-private partnerships in agricultural development with a view to leveraging available technology to enhance agricultural production.

Events related to capacity support for FRD

At FRD's request, the financial inclusion team provided technical support to workers at the union and state levels. This embedded technical assistance provides a good example of how effective such assistance can be in supporting changes in laws or regulations. As of 30 June 2019, the LIFT team conducted four batches of basic accounting training in which six regulators from 11 state and regional offices attended and completed. These trainings enhanced the basic accounting knowledge for regulators who can then utilise data to improve regulation of MFIs.

LIFT's Fund Management Office (FMO) worked with FRD's information technology (IT) team to review and check the quality of data submitted by all MFIs from December 2018 to April 2019. Together, FMO and the IT team prepared and submitted a gap analysis report to FRD. The findings of the gap analysis were presented and discussed in a workshop conducted

Table 2.3: Programme-level FP-1 indicators and achievements

| Indicator | Achievement | Achievement | Cumulative Achievement | Cumulative Milestone | Per cent Achieved | Data source |
|--|-------------|-------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| | 2010-2018 | 2019 | 2010-2019 | 2019 | | |
| FP-1.1 # of changes to FI related public sector policies and programmes supported by LIFT | 3 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 2 | Programme/IPs |
| FP-1.3 # of LIFT supported FI related policy-oriented events organised | 4 | 25 | 29 | 16 | 1.81 | Programme/IPs |
| FP-1.4 # of LIFT supported FI related policy-oriented publications provided to key policy makers | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 1 | Programme/IPs |

by the Ministry of Planning and Finance and Industry. Forty-two participants from all state and regional offices participated. FMO briefed the participants on gaps/errors in the data submitted by MFIs. Based on these findings, FMO drafted an off-site examination process and reporting format that was accepted. In addition, FMO conducted a five-day training on off-site supervision and ratio analysis. FMO also organised a meeting with Government regulators from FRD in Nay Pyi Taw to review the *Financial Literacy Booklet version II* and provided feedback and an action plan on how to spread financial literacy awareness to clients effectively.

During August & September 2019, FMO delivered the second five-day training on off-site examination for 52 staff/regulators from FRD from nine regional offices in Mandalay, Kayah, Yangon. A similar training was conducted for 26 staff/regulators from FRD from seven regional offices in Mandalay. FMO met with the new Director General of the Small Scale and Industrial Department and discussed the transformation process from NGO-based MFI to Company-based MFI for LIFT's implementing partner PGMF in Nay Pyi Taw.

Public - private partnership events

FMO teams met with State Cooperative Government officials in Myitkyina and Wai Maw Townships to discuss the feasibility of a future public-private-partnership programme in Kachin State. Another meeting was conducted with the Department of Agricultural Mechanisation, Department of Irrigation and Water Utilisation Management, and discussed

possible public-private sector partnerships in agricultural development for water supply technology, agricultural mechanisation and the availability of loans for cash crop production in Rakhine State.

Other notable events undertaken by LIFT's Financial Inclusion team include:

- » The public hearing of the Mandalay Region Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Livestock on 29 October 2019. FMO presented on the importance of private sector engagement in agriculture and rural markets and outlined achievements from its delivery of responsible financial services in Myanmar.
- » Poverty Probability Index (PPI) training to 65 participants from LIFT's microfinance institution partners and the Financial Regulatory Department (FRD).
- » LIFT, USAID and ADA supported the Myanmar Microfinance Forum and MMFA Annual General Assembly organised by the Myanmar Microfinance Association (MMFA) under the guidance of the Ministry of Planning, Finance and industry on 5 November 2019 in Nay Pyi Taw. LIFT's catalytic impact on Myanmar's microfinance industry was highlighted at this event.
- » FMO participated on a panel at the Agricultural Value Chain Finance in Myanmar: Policy, Practice and Inclusion workshop, organised by the Dana Facility and the Myanmar Economic Association, with support from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research.

Table 2.4: Programme-level FS-1 indicators and achievements

| Indicator | Achievement | Achievement | Cumulative Achievement | Cumulative Milestone | Per cent Achieved | Data source |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| | 2010-2018 | 2019 | 2010-2019 | 2019 | | |
| FS-1.1 %/# of LIFT supported MFIs financially self-sustaining | 38 | 20 | NA | 24 | 0.83 | Programme/IPs |
| FS-1.2 %/# of LIFT supported MFIs operating efficiently | 24 | 25 | NA | 24 | 1.04 | Programme/IPs |
| FS-1.3 # of individuals with access to LIFT supported financial services (active individual clients) | 2632283 2,389,373 F 242,910 M | 3,295,040 2,955,466 F 339,574 M | NA | 1,800,000 | 1.83 | Programme/IPs |
| FS-1.4 Value of private sector investment leveraged | USD 192 mln (Yoma) 86.2 mln (TCX) | USD 65 mln (Yoma) USD 175 mln (TCX) | USD 257 mln (Yoma) 261 mln (TCX) | 70,000,000 | 7.4 | Programme/IPs |

» FMO organised meetings with FRD to discuss the UNOPS/LIFT-managed technical assistance project Contingency Disaster Liquidity Fund (CDLF) with Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement in Ayeyarwady and Microfinance Deposit Insurance in Nay Pyi Taw from 6-16 December 2019.

FP-1.4 # of LIFT-supported financial inclusion-related, policy-oriented publications provided to key policy makers

FMO organised a series of stakeholders meetings for review on *Financial Literacy Booklet version II* in July 2019. FRD department supported government regulators meetings at Nay Pyi Taw and provided feedback and action plans for how to disseminate financial literacy awareness to clients effectively. LIFT's Financial Inclusion team provided technical support in the development of an updated Financial Literacy Booklet, which was launched at the First Myanmar Microfinance Forum in November 2019.

Financial Inclusion Programme - System Level

FS-1: Increased institutional capacity for provision of inclusive and socially responsible financial services

FS-1.1 %/# of LIFT supported MFIs financially self-sustaining

LIFT promotes increased access to financial services in rural and urban areas by supporting

the institutional and financial sustainability of its financial service providers. In 2019, LIFT supported 28 microfinance partners, including nine local microfinance organisations, two credit cooperatives, 15 international microfinance organisations and two joint venture microfinance company. Of these, 20 microfinance institutions are now considered financially self-sustaining (covering operational costs by income after adjusting for financial costs and inflation), achieving 83 per cent of the 2019 milestone.

FS-1.2 %/# of LIFT-supported MFIs operating efficiently

MFI institutional financial sustainability is measured by operational self-sufficiency, which takes into account operating expenses to average total assets, loan portfolio versus total assets, earning assets versus total assets and returns on loan portfolio. Based on analysis of these variables, 25 MFIs demonstrated operational efficiency during the reporting period, achieving 104 per cent of its 2019 milestone.

FS-1.3 # of individuals with access to LIFT-supported financial services (active individual clients)

LIFT's assistance to households through its microfinance partners, at both the financial and institutional levels, has grown consistently since 2011. By the end of 2019, MFI partners had provided financial services, primarily in the form of loans, to 3,295,040 of whom 90 per cent were women. This

Table 2.5: Programme-level FH-1 indicators and achievements

| Indicator | Achievement | Achievement | Cumulative Achievement | Cumulative Milestone | Per cent Achieved | Data source |
|---|--|---|--|---|-------------------|----------------|
| | 2010-2018 | 2019 | 2010-2019 | 2019 | | |
| FH-1.1 # of clients using micro, small and medium enterprise loans from LIFT supported MFIs and banks | 3,276,002 6,677 (Yoma AFP) | 540,934 (MFI) 711 (Yoma AFP) | 3,816,936 (MFI) 7,388 (Yoma AFP) | 3,059,459. (80% of 2010-2019 cumulative achievement) | 1.25 | Programme/ IPs |
| FH-1.2 Total value of loans disbursed by LIFT supported MFIs and banks | USD 2,531 mln (MFI: 2,339 mln, Yoma Bank USD 192 mln) | USD 1,169 mln (MFI: 1,104 mln, Yoma Bank USD 65 mln) | USD 3,700 mln (MFI: 3,443, Yoma Bank USD 257 mln. (Yoma Bank) | USD 1 billion | 3.7 | Programme/ IPs |
| FH-1.3 % of clients of LIFT supported MFIs and banks who do not meet their loan repayment terms | NA | MFI - less than 1% (>30 days) Bank- 5% (>60 days) | NA | 0.01 | 1 | Programme/ IPs |

represents an achievement of 183 per cent of the cumulative target for 2019, which is 1,800,000 clients.

FS-1.4 Value of private sector investment leveraged

The Currency Exchange Fund (TCX) (capital markets) and Yoma Bank (agribusiness financial services) are private sector partners of LIFT's Financial Inclusion Programme. At the end of 2019, LIFT's investment of USD 51.5 million with these partners had leveraged around USD 530 million from the private sector—a leverage of 10 times. As a result of TCX round II, 14 MFIs will have USD 175 million from foreign development financiers who will offer MMK-denominated loans to MFIs in compliance with the Central Bank of Myanmar's maximum interest rate on foreign lending. Yoma Bank is providing financial services for supporting small and medium rural agribusinesses. The fund leveraged USD 257 million for around 619,000 rural households by the end of 2019.

Financial Inclusion - Household Level

FH-1: Increased utilisation of socially responsible and sustainable financial services

FH-1.1 # of clients using micro- small- and medium- sized enterprise loans from LIFT-supported MFIs and banks

At the end of 2019, LIFT-supported MFIs had reached 3,816,936 clients in all geographical locations in Myanmar. All clients utilised their loans in micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises. This achievement accounts for 100 per cent of the cumulative target for 2019. The main businesses among the supported clients include small-scale trading of commodities, crop production and small-scale trading of livestock and fishery products. Although the size of loans was relatively small, the clients were able to generate a daily income.

FH-1.2 Total value of loans disbursed by LIFT-supported MFIs and banks

By the end of 2019, the bank and microfinance institutions had disbursed a total loan value of USD 1,553 million to their clients. During the 2019, the MFIs provided USD 1,104 million to 2,717,591 clients (91 per cent female) and Yoma Bank provided USD 65 million to 711 clients (7 per cent women). The

Table 2.6: Programme-level AP-1 indicators and achievements

| Indicator | Achievement 2010-2018 | Achievement 2019 | Cumulative Achievement 2010-2019 | Cumulative Milestone 2019 | Per cent Achieved | Data source |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------|--|---------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| AP-1.1 # of changes to agriculture related public sector policies and programmes supported by LIFT | 7 | 8 | 15 | 9 | 1.67 | Programme/ IPs |
| AP-1.2 # of changes in agriculture related public sector budget allocation/spending supported by LIFT | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | Programme/ IPs |
| AP-1.3 # of LIFT supported agriculture related policy oriented events organised | 17 | 23 | 40 | 17 | 2.35 | Programme/ IPs |
| AP-1.4 # of LIFT supported agriculture related policy oriented publications provided to key policy makers | 17 | 12 | 29 | 23 | 1.26 | Programme/ IPs |

achievement of this indicator is 155 per cent based on a targeted disbursement amount of USD 1 billion in 2019.

FH-1.3 % of clients of LIFT-supported MFIs and banks who do not meet their loan repayment terms

Less than 1 per cent of LIFT clients were unable to meet their repayment terms. Five per cent of Yoma Bank clients could not meet their repayments.

Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems - Policy Level

AP-1: New and/or improved gender-responsive public sector policies, programmes, and expenditure that support:

AP-1.1 # of changes to agriculture-related public sector policies and programmes supported by LIFT

LIFT's ongoing support in policy development contributed towards a number of key policy changes during this period. LIFT's strategic partner, Land Core group (LCG) continued work on land governance that contributed to the start of the drafting of the *National Land Law* in 2019. In 2019, the *Land Acquisition Law* was passed, and it incorporates several provisions that LCG advocated for in previous years:

- » It explicitly states implementation of the National Land Use Policy (NLUP) as one of its major objectives (4a)
- » It maintains the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) as a tool to promote the rights and voice of the affected population (4c)
- » It states that acquisition of customary tenure land requires a decision from the Union Parliament.

A further key policy change emanated from research associated with the beans and pulses value chain. Based on the findings, Michigan State University advocated with the Ministry of Commerce, MoALI and DICA to allow foreign companies to purchase directly from local markets. On June 6, 2019 the Ministry of Industry and Commerce lifted restrictions on foreign companies purchasing rice, pulses and maize on local markets for export in value-added form. This is the most significant change in agricultural trade policy since rice export market liberalisation. Impacts of the policy change will take time as foreign companies will first need to invest in processing facilities to take advantage of these changes.

Other notable changes include the Food Security Working Group's policy advocacy work that contributed towards the amendment of the *Village*

Firewood Plantation Laws and Rules for 13 states and nine regions. FAO continued to provide support to three key policy initiatives: cattle trade policy, the National Livestock Sector Registration Scheme and the National Livestock Baseline Survey.

AP-1.2 # of changes in agriculture related public sector budget allocation/spending supported by LIFT

In cooperation with the Department of Fisheries (DoF), Network Activities Group (NAG) mapped 282 Inn (fishing areas) in Pantanaw Township and in the process trained staff of the DoF on mapping and geographic information systems. The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI), committed to extending the mapping area and updating Inn (fishing areas) boundary demarcations using government resources. The regional government land use department allocated MMK 164,450,000 (USD 108,000) to support the updating of Inn maps in the 2019/2020 budget.

AP-1.3 # of LIFT-supported, agriculture-related, policy-oriented events organised

LIFT recorded significant achievements on this indicator consistent with the trend over the past five years. LIFT FMO and its partners including the International Fertilizer Development Center, Michigan State University (MSU), LCG, FSWG and Welthungerhilfe conducted a total of 23 policy-related events surpassing the planned overall target of 17 for 2019. A few of the key events undertaken includes the following:

- » Presentations on key findings and policy implications from the World Bank's Farm Production Economics Part 2 research funded by LIFT were made to the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI), the Yezin Agricultural University and the upper and lower houses of parliament on 22 May in Nay Pyi Taw.
- » A Food Security Policy Research Data Analysis Workshop was undertaken at Yezin Agricultural University and a workshop titled Agriculture, Value Chains, and Rural Transformation in Myanmar: Half a decade of evidence-based policy research was held at the Sedona Hotel, Yangon. These workshops sought to familiarise Myanmar policy makers, researchers and students from MoALI and Yezin with all datasets collected over the project life and encourage their utilisation.
- » LIFT organised a meeting with the Director General of the Department of Planning in Nay Pyi Taw and subsequent meetings with

11 Previous research documented the demand side of agricultural machine use (Filipski et al. 2018), and mechanization outsourcing services (Belton et al. 2018) in Myanmar's Central Dry Zone.

a regional agriculture minister to discuss the implementation arrangements for the REAL DEV Project

- » LCG organised the Alluvial Lands Administration Workshop and VFV committee member selection led by Yangon Regional Government.
- » Welthungerhilfe organised regional seed fairs as part of the Ayeyarwady Region and Seed Sector Platform Meetings and Match Making Session. This included high level representation by regional and Union governments.

AP-1.4 # of LIFT-supported, agriculture-related, policy-oriented publications provided to key policy makers

LIFT continues to support provision of policy-oriented publications so evidence from research, pilot activities and programme interventions can be used to influence gender-responsive, climate-smart and nutrition-sensitive policy development and reforms in agriculture and rural development. This indicator specifically focuses on policy-oriented publications related to policy reforms, new policies, legislative amendments, new laws or by-laws in agriculture, land administration or natural resource management provided to key policy makers by LIFT IPs.

Reported policy-oriented publications were mostly based on research activities undertaken by Michigan State University (MSU) from the Rural Economy and Agriculture Dry Zone Survey (READZ) and the Shan Household Agriculture and Rural Economy Survey

(SHARES) projects. Dry Zone research reports included *Agriculture Machinery Supply Businesses in Myanmar's Dry Zone: Growth and Transformation* and *The Edible Oil Milling Sector in Myanmar's Dry Zone* report. The former was published in February 2019 and is based on studies of Myanmar's process of rapid agricultural mechanisation and its impacts.¹¹ The report presents findings on the supply side of agricultural mechanisation, based on a survey of 57 agricultural machinery supply businesses in five urban centres, conducted in mid-December 2017. Together, these enterprises account for the majority of agricultural machinery supplied in the Dry Zone.

From the SHARES study, one research report titled *Rural Transformations in Southern Shan States: Results from the Community Component of the Shan Agriculture and Rural Economy Survey*, was produced. Two highlight reports on southern Shan State were also published covering agricultural land, agricultural mechanisation, and off-farm employment. SHARES off-farm value chain segment surveys focused on the demand side of maize farming and mechanisation by providing supply data on three sets of actors: maize traders, agricultural input suppliers and agricultural machinery supply businesses. Two research reports titled *Growth and Transformation in Off-Farm Segments of the Maize Value Chain in Shan State* and *Agricultural Machinery Business Development in Shan State: A Comparative Analysis* were produced from this SHARES off-farm value chain segment survey. All major survey datasets collected by MSU's research project except poultry and pig survey were

Table 2.7: Programme-level AS-1 indicators and achievements

| Indicator | Achievement | Achievement | Cumulative Achievement | Cumulative Milestone | Per cent Achieved | Data source |
|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| | 2010-2018 | 2019 | 2010-2019 | 2019 | | |
| AS-1.1 # of LIFT supported value chain service providers (public, private, CSO) promoting inclusive, climate smart and nutrition-sensitive agricultural production | N/A | 158 | 158 | 65 | 2.43 | IPs |
| AS-1.2 %/# of LIFT-supported input/service providers reporting business growth | N/A | 71 | 71 | 45 | 1.57 | IPs |
| AS-1.3 %/# of individuals reached by LIFT-supported agricultural advisory services | 264606 94,408 F 170,198 M | 38,154 10,640 F 27,514 M | 302760 105,048 F 197,712 M | 288,000 | 1.05 | IPs |
| As-1.4 # of value chain related decent jobs created for vulnerable individuals with LIFT support | N/A | 591 | 591 | 500 | 1.18 | IPs |

made publicly available on USAID's website, and shared with MoALI and Yezin staff in Myanmar.

The *Household Dietary Patterns and the Affordability of a Nutritious Diet in Myanmar* report was prepared for policy outreach on the role of agricultural research in supporting both the Agricultural Development Strategy (ADS) and the MS-NPAN. This report uses household food consumption data from the two most recent nationally-representative household living standards surveys to analyse three aspects of access to nutritious diets in Myanmar: (a) household food consumption patterns and quantities relative to local and international definitions of a nutritious diet, (b) the cost and affordability of a nutritious diet, and (c) the key drivers of the cost of a nutritious diet. And as a contribution to Pillar 2 of the Agricultural Development Strategy (ADS), a report on *Agricultural Research Capacity and Extension Linkages in Myanmar: Assessment and Recommendation* was prepared to raise the development of a research master plan to a core programme priority for the crop and irrigation sub-sector of the ADS. In addition to research reports, one journal article titled *Rural Transformation in Central Myanmar* was published by MSU.

Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems, System Level

AS-1: Value chain actors promote inclusive, climate smart and nutrition-sensitive agriculture

AS-1.1 # of LIFT supported value chain service providers (public, private, CSO) promoting inclusive, climate smart and nutrition-sensitive agricultural production

Five implementing partners (Mercy Corps, NAG, Metta, IFDC and CDN) reached a combined total of 158 value chain service providers exceeding the 2019 milestone of 65 providers. Some examples of key activities undertaken to promote inclusive climate smart and nutrition-sensitive agricultural production were:

IFDC provided support to 29 input service providers (ISP) who were selected to promote a variety of climate-smart and nutrition-sensitive agriculture training targeting its farmers, 38 per cent of whom are women. IFDC's standard training package includes elements such as seed, fertiliser and conservation agriculture, home gardening, GAP/post-harvest and green manure and composting.

NAG-ICAWR: NAG extended its support to 19 townships where the Fishery Development Associations (FDA's) were formed. A total of 64 FDAs in districts, townships and villages were established to support and coordinate local fishery groups interested in applying for permission to operate inn/tender through co-management associations. NAG supported the communities through the FDA in

applying for 168 fishing grounds (122 Inns, 43 Tenders and 3 Open Fishery). A total of 166 fishing grounds (119 Inns, 44 Tenders and three Open Fisheries) were awarded to these community groups. As part of the sustainability of the groups, trained members of the co-management groups are expected to continue to champion fisheries co-management and play an important role in helping communities retain a strong interest in natural resource conservation.

Metta in its Uplands project continued implementing agro-enterprise activities through a value chain approach from farm production to marketing. The project aims to increase consumer awareness of foods with high nutritional value and ecologically sound farming. All the activities are managed by farmers who are members of farmers field schools, natural resources management and forest user groups. Thirty-five per cent of the members are women.

AS-1.2 %/# of LIFT-supported input service providers reporting business growth

This is a new indicator that measures business growth of input service providers who are supported by LIFT. LIFT supports a range of service providers who in turn provide support to rural households to 'step up', 'step out', or 'hang in' through supporting them to benefit from value addition in the agricultural product value chains they work with. Business growth is broadly perceived to encompass quantity or value of inputs provided (for input providers), value of financial services provided (for financial service providers), or total revenue or net profit from input/service provision.

Seventy-one of 72 input service providers supported by LIFT partners, IFDC (29 of 30), WHH (37 of 37) and NAG (5 of 5) reported business growth during this reporting period. LIFT support focused on strengthening networking and linkages between the various market actors and the Department of Agriculture. Such linkages provide an important and sustainable avenue for sharing mutually beneficial information on the market environment as well as for capacity building.

The reported achievement represents 98.6 per cent of the input service providers that were supported by the IPs.

The IFDC UL project (Agro-Input and Farm Services Project-Uplands): The project provided farmer training, demonstrations, farmer field days, and a cost-share grant model for business enhancement targeting low-income smallholder farmers and ISPs in Kayah and Kayin. 30 ISPs were selected and trained on business management, record keeping, product knowledge and building stronger relationships with Department of Agriculture. The ISPs received business grants with the requirement that 25-30 per cent would go towards farmer vouchers, 25 per cent

for technology transfer and 50 per cent for business development. ISPs distributed more than 3,000 vouchers to increase their interactions with farmers and promoted the vouchers as a marketing tool. ISPs reported that the vouchers were an excellent way of encouraging new and existing customers into their shops and resulted in business growth.

WHH- Support to rice seed sector development (RSSD) in the Ayeyarwady Delta: This project aims to improve female and male farmers' access to and uptake of quality seed of improved and well adapted rice varieties. Three of its four components focus on supporting seed business development, strengthening seed quality assurance and strengthening seed sector coordination. Under the seed business development activities, the project undertook a number of activities to promote rice seed producers' businesses.

Co-investment grants for female seed growers: This activity was undertaken following the recommendation of the gender study and the project evaluation. Ten women-led seed enterprises, of 23 applications by women seed growers, were competitively selected to qualify for a small co-incentive grant fund. Under the no-cost extension, USD 50,000 was reallocated to support these women-led seed enterprises. Each woman seed grower was provided USD 5,000 to be matched by a contribution of their own equivalent to at least 20 per cent. These funds were used to support warehouse construction and purchasing agricultural equipment. Initial fund disbursements were made in December with construction of warehouses and purchase of the necessary equipment planned for January 2020.

Establishment of revolving fund for Shwe Khit Arr Man: To promote competitiveness of the Shwe Khit Arr Man (SKAM) seed grower association the project provided USD 25,000 for an investment fund. The 73 SKAM members make a 20 per cent contribution. The SKAM successfully managed the first cycle of the revolving fund achieving 99 per cent repayment. The average loan size was MMK 250,000 - 400,000 (USD 165-260), which was primarily used for seed planting and post-harvest management. The groups were able to produce and sell about 4,000 baskets of seed at a premium price. The profits earned from the revolving fund, covers SKAM's recurrent costs and is being re-invested in the association's seed business.

NAG-ICAWR project supported the business planning and livelihood development of fishing communities, to enhance their access to alternative income opportunities, and to help them reduce dependence on natural resources. Five fishery-related businesses were supported, and all reported that their business experienced growth as a result of diversifying income opportunities. These includes: Labutta Township Ah Yar Taw (Shrimp Paste); Thabaung Township Kyon Ta Dun (Fish Paste and Fish Sauce); Pantanaw

Township Mwayt Pin (Thin Mat); Zalun Township Pauk Kone (Dried Snakehead) and Danubyu Township Ak Kyaw (Dried Snakehead). NAG, through its Fishery Value Chain Advisor conducted regular field support and monitoring visits to assess the performance of the businesses in terms of business growth and expansion of market opportunities. A visit to Ban Kyun Village in Dedaye Township, where the SME focusing on value added dried Bombay-duck production operates revealed the businesses established contacts with local retailers in Mandalay, Yangon-Shwe Pauk Kan, Pyi, Natalin, and Ywar Thar Gyi markets, and were supplying fish directly for retail sale. In Kyaw village, (Danubyu township) where 12 members were supported in production of a ready-to-eat snakehead product, the businesses expanded their market linkages and were selling their products in Yangon, Hinthada, and Mandalay. Small quantities even found their way to Singapore. Prior to receiving grant support, the 65 women in the mat weaving group used to take the raw material on loan from traders and sold the semi-finished goods to the same traders at a fixed price. With project support, the group is able to buy the raw material on their own and sell to whoever is offering the best price, improving their profit margins.

AS-1.3 %/# of individuals reached by LIFT-supported agricultural advisory services

Advisory services are delivered in a variety of ways including direct extension to individuals in villages, training courses at different levels, farmer field schools and training conducted by village trainers. Over the years, LIFT has consistently reached high numbers of rural households engaged in production with agricultural advisory services. In 2019, LIFT partners reached approximately 38,150 individuals (28 per cent women) with advisory services. Cumulatively, LIFT has now reached a total of 302,700 households since 2010.

The achievements reported were mainly derived from activities undertaken by Catholic Relief Services (CRS), CDN, International Fertiliser Development Center (IFDC), Welthungerhilfe (WHH-RSSD), MercyCorps, NAG and Myanmar Institute for Integrated Development (MIID).

The Consortium of Dutch NGOs (CDN) contributed to improved knowledge on agricultural crop production through activities such as training of producer groups, agricultural extension training to farmers, water infrastructure operation and maintenance training and soil fertility management training.

The WHH-RSSD project delivered various advisory services around rice seed including Early Generation Seed App training to farmers and DoA staff, Quality Seed App training to farmers and Yezin Agricultural University students.

CRS conducted refresher training for field agents and delivered home gardening training sessions to lead mothers, pregnant and breastfeeding women.

Mercy Corps LLM project in collaboration with the DoA and private sector actors trained the input supply and training managers (ITMs) who in turn played important roles in coordinating technical training for the farmer producer enterprises (FPE). Within a FPE, the ITM also identified which farmers required inputs, oversaw distribution of inputs and assisted with monitoring whether or not members were using inputs correctly.

AS-1.4 # of value chain related decent jobs created for vulnerable individuals with LIFT support

This is a new indicator through which LIFT seeks to measure the number of decent jobs created within the agricultural value chains supported by LIFT-funded interventions. Three LIFT implementing partners report having created approximately 590 value chain-related decent jobs linked to skills training and provided business opportunities to women, the poor and other vulnerable groups.

IFDC formed eight working groups (five in Kayah and three in Kayin) that initiated diverse projects focusing on training (organic production, extension techniques, organic commercial vegetable, agronomic training, ecosystem conservation), production (community vegetable production, greenhouse, home gardens, rice seed production) and marketing. A total of 251 individuals (149 women) were involved in the eight working groups.

Mercy Corps Linking Laputta to Markets project provided market-oriented skills training on a broad range of occupations (hospitality, mechanics, garments and construction) in addition to job linkages for graduates through job fairs and direct contact with relevant industries locally and in Yangon. Through its continued strategic partnerships with two CSO partners, Swan Saung Shin and Pin Le Pyar, and the Government Vocational Training School in Labutta, the project worked to ensure that skill-training capacities (market-oriented curricula, skilled trainers, networks established with potential employers, etc.) are institutionalised and left behind within Labutta's relevant stakeholders when it ends. Linkages have been established between the CSOs and Yangon based industries for future employment opportunities. A total of 717 landless people completed skills training, bringing the cumulative number of graduates to 1,681 (30 per cent women). Among these 1,681 graduates, 79 per cent are employed. The number of employers linked with the project increased to 126 by the end of 2019. The annual job fair was successfully conducted in Patheingyi and attended by 27 private sector industries and 178 graduates. More than 72 graduates signed up for employment, with an additional seven graduates

from the Ministry of Border Affairs Training School in Labutta signing employment contracts with Yangon-based industries.

Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems, Household Level

AH-1: Increased production, income and food security through commercialisation and/or diversification of sustainable and nutrition-sensitive agriculture

As part of the transition in supporting these new indicators, LIFT prepared detailed indicator reference sheets (IRS) to guide in data collection and calculation of the indicator measurements by the IPs. However, it became apparent that proposed measurement methodologies for some of the indicators under this section were complex and would be best undertaken through a large household survey. For some, more time was required for IPs to institute appropriate systems to collect data, taking into account the different cropping seasons and that all projects in the AMFS portfolio were effectively legacy projects developed to capture the previous suite of indicators. Some of the IP projects had also been closed or were coming to an end by the time the IRS was concluded and ready for sharing with IPs.

LIFT's M&E team took the step of including these indicators under the 2019 household survey to obtain more comprehensive data on the full scope of LIFT's achievements. In the absence of the household survey data, these indicators, except AH 1.3, have been reported based on IP level data. While the reported achievements are good based on the targeted milestone achievements, gaps in reporting were encountered and these are described in Summary of LIFT Achievements at the end of this chapter.

AH-1.1 %/# of people reached by LIFT-supported advisory services using good agricultural practices (GAP), inputs and technologies (including mechanisation)

Assessment of this indicator was predicated on the IPs conducting regular or periodic data collection targeting the farmers who had received GAP practices, inputs and technology to establish the extent of adoption. Some of the IPs collected their data as part of the routine and periodic monitoring of all the farmers that had received training. Others with high numbers of trainees conducted sample surveys based on a randomly selected group of farmers. LIFT IPs report that over 19,800 people (61 per cent of those trained) were using GAP, inputs and technology from LIFT supported advisory services, of which nearly 26 per cent, were female-headed households. The IPs reporting the highest numbers include CORAD (4,806), CRS (3,113), Mercy Corps (1,342), Metta (905), and FAO (668).

Table 2.8: Programme-level AH-1 indicators and achievements

| Indicator | Achievement | Achievement | Cumulative Achievement | Cumulative Milestone | Per cent Achieved | Data source |
|---|-------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 2010-2018 | 2019 | 2010-2019 | 2019 | | |
| AH-1.1 %/# of people reached by LIFT-supported advisory services using Good Agricultural Practices, inputs and technologies (including mechanisation) | N/A | 19,819 4,731 F 15,088 M | 19,819 4,731 F 15,088 M | 20,000 | 0.99 | IPs |
| AH-1.2 Area/% of cultivated land under Good Agricultural Practices in LIFT areas. | N/A | 17,426 | 17,426 | 24,000 | 0.73 | Programme/ IPs |
| AH-1.4 #/% of LIFT supported farmers reporting increased income from agricultural activities | N/A | 7,972 | 7,972 | 9,000 | 0.89 | IPs |

Metta in its Uplands project supported ecologically sound agricultural practices through farmer field school (FFS) and extension trainings, demonstrations, and exchange visits on the production of agro-forestry crops intercropped with perennial crops. For the value chain producer groups, the trainings focused on sustainable cropping practices, seed selection and multiplication methods, and crop economic analysis. For the natural resource management groups, special focus was given to land preparation and crop management. Metta conducted an endline survey that investigated the adoption of the good agricultural practices and the resultant outcomes. Results show that all the trained farmers adopted at least one of the new practices that was introduced. For the value chain groups, the highest levels of adoption in two survey locations of Kachin and northern Shan were observed in the application of seed adoption methods (82 per cent and 84 per cent respectively), spacing between plants (72 per cent and 77 per cent), use of ridges (75 per cent and 68 per cent) and utilisation of storage practices (both locations above 90 per cent).

AH-1.2 Area/% of cultivated land under Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) in LIFT areas.

This indicator measures the area of land in acres where GAP is being applied by farmers supported

by LIFT IPs that promote GAP through advisory/extension services. This does not require a GAP certification scheme to be in place, or that the producers or their agricultural products are certified under such a scheme. IPs collect this data either routinely through the system of extension workers or as a sample survey where the number of farmers adopting GAP is very large.

Four implementing partners reported that LIFT farmers had applied GAP on a total of 17,426 acres of land. **Mercy Corps** reported about 9,891 acres of farmland had been put under GAP through the contract farming schemes. Based on individual farmer as well as group level records, **CORAD** reported about 4,911 acres had been put under GAP. **Metta-Uplands** reported 2,265 acres of land under GAP. The **WHH-RSSD** project reported 359.5 acres of land under pilot contract farming for certified seed production. The project's average area of cultivated land under GAP was about 7.37 acre/farmer in the case of Mercy Corps, 2.14 acre/farmer for Metta-Uplands and 4.23 acre/farmer for WHH-RSSD.

AH-1.4 #/% of LIFT supported farmers reporting increased income from agricultural activities

This indicator measures the number of households reached by LIFT-supported advisory services who

¹² The alternative of using actual estimated values of household agricultural production generated as part of AH-1.3, and returning to the same households over time to compare, is possible but overly complex/costly. The indicator uses the term 'reporting' to signify a simpler approach.

report increased income from agricultural activities since the commencement of the new phase in 2019. The percentage is the fraction of the total number of households reached by LIFT-supported advisory services as reported in AS-1.3, who report increased income. It is thus based on the perceptions of the farmers regarding increased income from agriculture activities.¹²

Three implementing partners reported that almost 8,000 individuals increased their incomes from agricultural activities through LIFT's support. These were: Mercy Corps (2,987), CORAD (4,706) and Metta-Uplands (279). The achievements were based on data collected through surveys or regular monitoring undertaken by the IPs on a sample of their beneficiaries who had received GAP related services.

Decent Work and Labour Mobility - Policy level

DP-1: New and/or improved gender-responsive public sector policies, programmes, and expenditure on:

- » Labour rights and social protection (e.g., ratify C189, *Violence Against Women Law, Social Security Law*)
- » Labour migration governance (e.g., *Law Relating to Overseas Employment, Plan of Action on Labour Migration*)
- » Forced labour, child labour and anti-trafficking (e.g., *Plan of Action on Forced Labour, Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law*)
- » Employment and skills development (e.g., *Skills Development Law, TVET Law, National Occupational Competency Standards*)

DP-1.1 # of changes to labour-related public sector policies and programmes supported by LIFT

Reported changes under this indicator were mainly achieved through the activities of LIFT's partners, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and CARE.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population (MoLIP) announced it was lifting the ban on migration of Myanmar domestic workers abroad in April 2019. The policy was first enacted in 2014 with the intention of protecting domestic workers from abuse, but instead had the effect of preventing domestic workers from migrating through formal legal channels, making them more vulnerable. LIFT's implementing partner, the International Labour Organization (ILO) worked with civil society and labour organisations for several years to advocate for a removal of the ban and replacing it with greater labour rights protection for domestic working migrating abroad.

Other notable changes that were realised through ILO's project activities include the following:

- » Removal of ban on migration of domestic workers
- » National Plan of Action of the Management of Labour Migration
- » Committee formed on repatriation of undocumented migrant workers
- » Directive allowing recruitment agencies to set up branches in the states and regions
- » Women permitted to apply for jobs as labour attaches

ILO Skills Development project is geared towards setting up of the very first National Skill Standard Authority (NSSA) accredited skills assessment center for the hotel and tourism sector in the region bringing together private sector, technical government departments from union and state levels. The project plays a key role in facilitating the completion of application documents and inspection of the hotel's facilities by NSSA inspection team from the Department of Labour in Nay Pyi Taw. The beneficiaries trained by different institutions (Government/NGOs/INGOs) have a chance to be assessed and hold the certificate promoting employment opportunities in the region and out of the region.

CARE's Aung Myin Hmu project advocated for incorporating gender sensitivity and sexual harassment in the *Occupational Safety and Health Law*. Myanmar's existing labour laws do not provide sufficient mechanisms to prevent or provide redress for sexual harassment within the workplace and there is strong resistance to acknowledging the problem among many factory owners due to reputational concerns. To address this issue Aung Myin Hmu project directly advocated with members of parliament, worked to expand the capacity of women workers to advocate for policy changes through the National Tripartite Dialogue Forum and formed coalitions for advocacy with like-minded organisations (Fair Wear Foundation, Gender Equality Network and APHEDA). As a result, prevention and support for workers experiencing psychological incidents, as well as four other recommended changes relating to gender sensitivity and sexual harassment, were included in the final articles of the *Occupation Safety and Health Law* that was adopted.

DP-1.2 # of changes in labour related public sector budget allocation/spending supported by LIFT

Through advocacy and technical support efforts of CARE's Aung Myin Hmu project, the Ministry of Border Affairs (MOBA) training centre in North Dagon was refurbished to meet international compliance and safety standards and 130 machines were replaced. The training centre reopened in February 2019 and

has run three courses, training a total of 324 sewing machine operators for the garment industry.

ILO successfully advocated for the opening of the Temporary Myanmar Labor Data Collection Centre in Samut Prakan for renewal of work passports in Thailand and appointment of new labour attachés for deployment: five in Thailand, two in Malaysia and one in South Korea to ensure migrants receive full labour rights protection and are protected from human trafficking in destination countries.

DP-1.3 # of LIFT supported labour-related policy-oriented events organised

Reported achievements in 2019 were mainly realised through a broad range of policy-related activities undertaken by ILO, CARE, IOM, BBC Media Action and FMO. These include bilateral meetings with government officials, working group meetings, workshops, training and public events, at the national and regional levels.

Consultative meetings/workshops

Consultative meetings/workshops addressed a broad range of issues including rights of migrant workers; legal regime for domestic workers; irregular migrations and child labour among others.

ILO organised a number of meetings with members of parliament specifically focusing on labour protection for domestic workers. These included:

- » Meeting with Women and Peace MPs Group and Working Group on Public Opinion Poll Survey Findings and Overview of ILO Convention 189 and Recommendation 201 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers, 13-14 February 2019, Nay Pyi Taw
- » Meeting with Women and Peace MPs Group and Working Group on Examples of Laws Relating to National Domestic Workers and Overseas Migrant Domestic Workers, 27-28 February 2019, Nay Pyi Taw
- » Meeting with Women and Peace MPs Group and Working Group on Legislative Recommendations on Legal Protection of Domestic Workers in Myanmar in line with the ILO Convention 189, 6 March 2019, Nay Pyi Taw
- » Documentary night on domestic workers with Women and Peace MPs Group organised by NDI, 14 March 2019
- » Trafficking shelter VIP visit by State Counselor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in Yangon on 21 August 2019

LIFT and the UK's Department for International Development organised a multi-stakeholder event in May 2019 in Yangon about decent work and labour mobility in Rakhine and Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. The forum was attended by a wide range of actors working on both sides of the border. The forum focused on the challenges and opportunities for labour markets in Rakhine and Cox's Bazar, identifying knowledge gaps, and building cross-border cooperation among organisations.

Table 2.9 Programme-level DP-1 indicator and achievements

| Indicator | Achievement | Achievement | Cumulative Achievement | Cumulative Milestone | Per cent Achieved | Data source |
|--|-------------|-------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| | 2010-2018 | 2019 | 2010-2019 | 2019 | | |
| DP-1.1 # of changes to labour related public sector policies and programmes supported by LIFT | N/A | 11 | 11 | 6 | 1.83 | Programme/lps |
| DP-1.2 # of changes in labour related public sector budget allocation/spending supported by LIFT | N/A | 3 | 3 | 1 | 3 | Programme/lps |
| DP-1.3 # of LIFT supported labour related policy-oriented events organised * | 57 | 76 | 133 | 77 | 1.73 | Programme/lps |
| DP-1.4 # of LIFT supported labour related policy oriented publications provided to key policy makers | 7 | 35 | 42 | 13 | 3.23 | Programme/lps |

LIFT's Decent Work and Labour Mobility team organised a meeting between Eden Ministry and the ASEAN-Australia Counter-Trafficking project funded by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to discuss the policy advocacy activities that Eden has planned on changing prosecutorial procedures for sex trafficking cases in Myanmar in Yangon in February 2019.

The Fund Management Office (FMO) was interviewed by the Democratic Voice of Burma on the need to develop policies that better support inclusion and social cohesion for the migrant community in Naypyitaw.

FMO organised two talks by Dr Elena Shih titled *Trafficking-Development Nexus on the Myanmar China Border* for implementing partners of the LIFT migration programme and FMO staff in UNOPS office, and for members of the Fund Board and other donor representatives in the Australian Embassy, Yangon.

A workshop to develop gender-based violence referral pathways in Yangon was organised by CARE as part of its work on sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

DP-1.4 # of LIFT-supported, labour-related, policy-oriented publications provided to key policy makers

LIFTs policy publications remain a critical element of the broader policy influencing agenda targeting existing legislative and policy frameworks on labour and migration. Achievements during this period consisted of 12 publications by ILO, two by Care, 12 by IOM CHIME Project, one by IOM Twe Let, four by Michigan State University and four OP-EDs by LIFT FMO.

ILO publications included: C189 Policy Advocacy (Myanmar 2019), Public Opinion Poll (2019), Comparative Law Analysis, (2019), Gap Analysis (2019), Public Opinion Poll Findings Brief (English, September 2019), Legal Gap Analysis on Myanmar Laws concerning Domestic Workers in relation to ILO Convention 189 (Myanmar, September 2019), Legal Gap Analysis on Myanmar Laws concerning Domestic Workers in relation to ILO Recommendation 201 (Myanmar language, September 2019) and Brief of Legal Gap Analysis on Myanmar Laws concerning Domestic Workers (Myanmar language in September 2019; English language in December 2019). The Labour Migration Data for Evidence Based Policies: An Appraisal of Data and Statistics on International Labour Migration was published in Myanmar language (previously published in English) and provides an overview of the current statistics available, proposing the type of statistics and information needed for the development of evidence-based labour migration policies. The paper will also support the government in their reporting obligations for the Sustainable

Development Goals and the International Labour Migration Information System (LMIS).

The CHIME project produced 12 publications in 2019 that included:

- » Capitalising Human Mobility for Poverty Alleviation and Inclusive Development for Myanmar" (CHIME) study
- » *Migration and Agriculture: Migration dynamics, patterns and impacts for Chime project* (IOM, US, Metta, MoLIP), March, 2019
- » *Migration and Gender: Migration dynamics, patterns and impacts for Chime project* (IOM, US, Metta, MoLIP), March, 2019
- » *Migration and Urbanisation: Migration dynamics, patterns and impacts for Chime project* (IOM, US, Metta, MoLIP), March, 2019
- » *Migration, Poverty and Indebtedness: Migration dynamics, patterns and impacts for Chime project* (IOM, US, Metta, MoLIP), March, 2019
- » Social impacts of migration in Myanmar: Migration dynamics, patterns and impacts from the CHIME research project (IOM, US, Metta, MoLIP)
- » Migrant Employment Migration dynamics, patterns and impacts from the CHIME research project (IOM, US, Metta, MoLIP)
- » Four regional briefs of migration (Ayeyarwady, Rakhine, Mandalay and Shan)
- » Executive summary of CHIME study and Full CHIME research report

Decent Work and Labour Mobility - System Level

DS-1: Enhanced capacity of stakeholders to support decent work (including reducing gender wage gap), labour mobility and anti-trafficking

DS-1.1 # of stakeholder representatives trained to support decent work and labour mobility

LIFT partners provided training to different stakeholders aimed at promoting decent work conditions and to facilitate and get benefit from sectoral and geographical mobility. EDEN trained 83 individuals (42 women) from government, the private sector and civil society.

The trainings focused on labour and social protection, safe migration and anti-trafficking. Training by ILO targeted tripartite constituents: government, employers and worker representatives reaching 269 stakeholders (55 per cent women). The focus of the training was on labour rights and safe migration, strengthening reporting capacity of CSOs, settling of labour disputes, training on complaints data management among others. In the Aung Myin Hmu project, Care International provided training on gender-based violence prevention and awareness of sexual harassment in workplace. The training targeted factory staff and committee members reaching a total of 241 individuals (70 per cent women). Under

the Tve Let Project; consortium partners IOM, PDN, MWO and CHRO organised migration and development consultation workshops in Myingyan, Pakkoku, Taunggyi, Mandalay, Mawlamyine and Hakha. Local stakeholders discussed migration and development linkages and the positive and negative impacts of labour migration on migrants, households and communities, as well as developed recommendations on increasing the developmental impacts of migration for the human and economic development of their respective states and regions. A total of 780 individuals (65 per cent women) were reached through these workshops.

BBC Media Action worked with media partners to improve their skills and knowledge in reporting on migration. With the training, the partner media outlets were expected to be able to produce content for the local communities that they serve in their local languages. Training approaches and content included a joint training lab where media partners joined a workshop in Yangon and were introduced to broader issues of migration and remittances, participated in one-to-one coaching activities with partners to produce content on migration issues related to their particular region, and participated in community discussions with local audiences and expert guests from the local area and media (Open Radio Days). BBC Media through the Yay Kyi Yar team also conducted three workshops in Yangon, Chin and Kachin States. There was also a week-long *Reporting on ASEAN Migration* capacity building activity organised for 12 editors and senior journalists in Yangon and Bangkok. Cumulatively, BBC Media Action reached a total of 103 individuals (34 per cent female).

DS-1.3 Amount of money awarded to workers for redress of grievances and fulfilment of benefit claims (modified)

One of the key interventions provided by LIFT partners is legal assistance to migrant workers to enhance their knowledge of labour rights, facilitating practices of their rights and ensuring their rights are protected. ILO and its partners provided the service through Migrant Centres. One partner, Confederation of Trade Union of Myanmar (CTUM) assisted 1,669 migrant workers (32 per cent women) in 179 cases. The total cash received was MMK 658 million (USD 470,000), averaging around MMK 400,000 (USD 260) per migrant. Most cases were related to agencies overcharging, having costs reimbursed after paying recruitment fees and not being placed in a job; workplace accidents and deaths, and breach of employment contracts.

Decent Work and Labour Mobility - Household level

DH-1: Increased access to information, training and support services for women and men migrants and other vulnerable workers

DH-1.1 # of individuals successfully completing LIFT-supported training on technical and vocational skills and enterprise development

LIFT's implementing partners provided training to over 11,203 individuals (64 per cent women) attaining 95 per cent per cent of the overall target for 2019. Through the training, beneficiaries were equipped with technical and vocational skills in a broad range of trades (plumbing, electrical wiring, welding, plumbing, business development, food preservation and hairdressing among others), with a view to helping them establish their own enterprises or secure

Table 2.10 Programme-level DS-1 indicators and achievements

| Indicator | Achievement | Achievement | Cumulative Achievement | Cumulative Milestone | Per cent Achieved | Data source |
|--|-------------|--|----------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| | 2010-2018 | 2019 | 2010-2019 | 2019 | | |
| DS-1.1 # of representatives of government, private sector, civil society, labour organizations and media trained with LIFT support on labour and social protection, safe migration and anti-trafficking, by sex. | 1,999 | 2,094 1,240 F 892 M | 4131 2,436 F 1,695 M | 2,999 | 138% | IPs |
| DS-1.3 Amount of money awarded to workers for redress of grievances and fulfilment of benefit claims (modified) | N/A | MMK 658.8m equivalent to USD 470,571 | 17,426 | USD 350,000 | 134% | IPs |

gainful employment. The organisations contributing a high proportion of the trainees included IOM, CARE, DRC/NRC, Save the Children Tatlan, the Border Consortium and World Vision International.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM), in partnership with local civil society organisations in Chin State, Shan State, the South-East, and the Dry Zone, provided 31 types of skills development trainings reaching 2,472 individuals (55 per cent women). Business development training was provided under Tier 1 (household financial and remittance management coaching) and Tier 2 (micro-enterprise start-up coaching). CARE International, through the Industry Solutions for Safe Employment project implemented by Aung Myin Hmu provided training in various skills including sewing machine operators, sewing machine mechanics and quality control and cutting room operators. Under phase two of the Vocational Training and Livelihood Opportunities for Youth In and Out of Camps in Rakhine State project, Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) trained a total of 1,714 individuals (54 per cent women). The trainings consisted of short-term and long-term courses tailored to individuals' needs, capacities and the local market capacity to absorb skilled workers. All the trainees received life skills education as well as coaching on business plan designs. Save the Children, Tat Lan Plus provided financial literacy and business skills training to 779 beneficiaries (74 per cent women). The training aimed at supporting development of business plans for the households, as well as increasing financial skills for improved business and household financial management.

Trainings targeting vulnerable groups were provided by Eden and ILO. EDEN trained 44 rescued women in vocational programmes including jewellery-making, hairdressing and beauty therapy, basic computer skills, sales and marketing, financial literacy, sewing, mathematics, Burmese, Chinese and English languages. Another 49 people with disabilities received business skills development courses under the Eden Centre for Disabled Children. ILO developed a 5-week vocational skills curriculum for domestic workers including topics related to safe food handling, kitchen hygiene, cookery, kitchen management, and basic nutrition, money and time management, safe migration and personal security. Five training courses of five-weeks duration were conducted with 40 domestic workers.

DH-1.2 # of migrant workers and family members provided with LIFT supported information, training and support services

LIFT implementing partners reached 85,828 beneficiaries (58 per cent women) with information, training and support services mainly through activities undertaken by IOM, ILO, EDEN, CARE International and World Vision International.

IOM's Tve Let project continued providing pre-migration training and safe migration information to beneficiaries in target areas so they could become better informed about the necessary preparations required for migration. Training was provided directly to the community as well as through trained safe migration promoters who cascaded the information to the village level whenever necessary. Various approaches were adopted including routine

Table 2.11: Programme-level DH-1 indicator and achievements

| Indicator | Achievement | Achievement | Cumulative Achievement | Cumulative Milestone | Per cent Achieved | Data source |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| | 2010-2018 | 2019 | 2010-2019 | 2019 | | |
| DH-1.1 # of individuals successfully completing LIFT supported training on technical and vocational skills and enterprise development | 65,186 41,203 F 23,983 M | 11,203 7,215 F 3,988 M | 76,389 48,418 F 27,971 M | 80,186 | 95% | IPs |
| DH-1.2 # of migrant workers and family members provided with LIFT supported information, training and support services on safe migration and financial literacy | N/A | 85,828 49,578 F 36,250 M | 85,828 49,578 F 36,250 M | 30,000 | 286% | IPs |
| DH-1.3 # of survivors of trafficking provided with LIFT supported shelter and/or support services | N/A | 276 F | 276 F | 150 | 184% | IPs |

awareness creation activities, edutainment show, theater shows and through social media such as Miss Migration Chatbot and hotline services. IOM's Dry Zone CSO partners delivered additional village-level trainings on financial literacy. A total of 51,187 beneficiaries (58 per cent women) were reached through the migration awareness trainings/workshops.

Through partnership with CSOs, ILO provided services on migration and labour including legal and information services. Most of these services were delivered through the six migrant workers resource centres that were established in Tachilek, (Shan State), Kawthaung (Tanintharyi), North Dagon, (Yangon), GoodMove in Shwe Pyi Thar industrial zone, (Yangon), Bago and Samaritans Purse in (Myawaddy). Over 12,000 migrants are reported to have directly received services at the centres while ILO reached a total of 16,606 individuals (54 per cent women) with the various information services and trainings.

World Vision International provided vocational training in micro/small business creation leading to decent work opportunities for vulnerable households in 30 villages. The project also complemented and worked closely with IOM's safe migration initiative, which is supporting the project's safe work and vocational training. A total of 1,446 individuals (47 per cent women) benefited from World Vision's activities. With the support of Aung Myin Hmu project, the migrant workers could access information and networking services through Sunday Cafe Advancement Education Session. CARE managed to reach 2,625 women.

DH-1.3 # of survivors of trafficking provided with LIFT supported shelter and/or support services

While enrolled in Eden's programme the majority of beneficiaries live in one of Eden's three shelters (two in Yangon, one in Lashio). Eden opened two new shelters in 2019, one in Lashio and another in Yangon dedicated to mothers with young children. Seventy-three women received safe shelter in 2019. With the support of Aung Myin Hmu project, 143 vulnerable migrant women received support services by connecting with Thone Pan Hla Women in Crisis Hotline. Services provided include: immediate (within minutes) and intermediate (2-3 months) housing at Thone Pan Hla hostel, food, clothing, job and housing placement, travel fees, legal and medical services.

DH-2: Expanded opportunities for decent work, particularly for workers who are at a heightened risk of exploitation and abuse.

DH-2.1 %/# of individuals successfully completing LIFT-supported training who establish their own enterprises (including trafficking survivors)

This is a modified indicator which measures the number of trained individuals under (DH 1.1) who

establish small- or medium-sized enterprises in any economic sector (including agriculture, industry or services) but excluding subsistence farming and fishing. Reporting of this indicator is contingent upon IPs undertaking follow up monitoring or assessments including tracer studies to establish whether the trainees have succeeded in establishing their own enterprises or not. Potential overlaps in reporting can occur based on training duration, completion and scheduling the tracer studies or periodic tracking.

In 2019, nine LIFT IPs reported that 1,972 individuals (69 per cent women) who had completed training were able to establish their own enterprises. This represented 76 per cent of those reached by the IPs under DH 1.1. Enterprises established were varied and linked to the specific skills received: mechanics, carpentry and masonry, motorcycle repair, car driving and maintenance, welding, advanced sewing skills, English language and computer accounting courses, aircon repair, tailoring, bakery, food and beverage and electrical installation.

Reported reach is based on tracer studies conducted by the LIFT IPs that provided business skills development as reported under DS 1.1. LIFT will work with the partners towards implementing a standard approach to conducting the tracer studies for the next reporting period.

DH-2.2 # of individuals employed six months after completing LIFT-supported vocational skills training

This is also a new indicator that measures the total number of trained individuals (DH-1.1) who are employed six months after completing LIFT-supported vocational skills training. The employment may be in any economic sector (agriculture, industry, services). Employment comprises all persons of working age who are currently engaged in an economic activity for any length of time and who receive income for their work in the form of wages.

LIFT IPs reported that 1,972 beneficiaries (55 per cent women) of the vocational trainings managed to secure employment. These achievements were reported by IOM under the Twe Let and MILDAS projects; ILO under the project DILMM and Care International under Aung Myin Hmu project and Mercy Corps. The achievements represent 74 per cent of the individuals reached by the IPs under DH 1.1

Like the previous indicator, reported reach is based on tracer studies conducted by the LIFT IPs that provided vocational skills training as reported under DS 1.1. LIFT will work with the partners towards implementing a standard approach for the next reporting period.

DH-2.3 %/# of individuals successfully completing LIFT supported training with increased income from their employment or enterprise.

This indicator measures the number of individuals who have achieved an increased income six months after completing vocational or enterprise development training (DH 1.1). It is based on the respondents' subjective perception of an increase in personal income and does not capture empirical data to quantify the change. It is inclusive of increases in income resulting from finding employment after previously being unemployed. For purposes of measurement, all enterprise development trainees who succeed in establishing enterprises as reported in DH 2.1 and DH 2.2 qualify to be considered as having increased income hence are taken as the numerator. The denominator will be the total number of trainees reached through the tracer studies.

Based on the reported achievements under DH 2.1 and DH 2.2; a total of 3,764 individuals (62 per cent women) can be perceived to have increased income in 2019 based on having set up their enterprises and secured gainful employment. This achievement represents 75 per cent of the beneficiaries reached by the IPs through tracer studies.

Summary of LIFT results January-June 2019

Based on analysis of the reported indicators, overall progress during this reporting period is deemed satisfactory. LIFT has been able to report on 39 out of 42 indicators that relied on IP-level data. LIFT met or exceeded 33 of the 39 reported indicators (84 per cent).

LIFT met or exceeded the target milestones on all the seven out of eight outcome-level policy indicators reported across the four thematic areas. This achievement mirrors LIFT's consistent trend over the years in influencing public policy on a wide range of issues affecting the livelihoods of communities. The target milestone for one financial inclusion outcome indicators (FH-1.3) was also exceeded.

Performance on two outcome indicators (all new) of the **Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems Programme**: AH-1.2 % of cultivated land under good agricultural practices in LIFT areas, and AH-1.4: #/% of LIFT supported farmers reporting increased income from agricultural activities was fairly good although the set of milestones were not met. This performance is attributed to the fact that some of the IPs were not able to provide data based on the requirements of the new strategy. Outcome indicator AH-1.3: Average estimated value of agricultural production, consumed or sold, by households receiving LIFT supported agricultural advisory services was not reported because of the complexity associated with measuring it. To be measured effectively, it would require detailed questions on production and consumption of each crop cultivated during the season and the average price for each among other metrics, a process that would best be undertaken through a large household survey.

Under the old strategy logframe, the above indicators were measured through the LIFT household survey. The new logframe now requires IPs to adapt their monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to measure these indicators. Based on the adopted methodology guidelines, it was evident to LIFT that more time was required than was available to support all the IPs

Table 2.12: Programme-level DH-2 indicator and achievements

| Indicator | Achievement | Achievement | Cumulative Achievement | Cumulative Milestone | Per cent Achieved | Data source |
|---|-------------|-----------------------------|--|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| | 2010-2018 | 2019 | 2010-2019 | 2019 | | |
| DH-2.1 %/# of individuals successfully completing LIFT supported training who establish their own enterprises (including trafficking survivors) | N/A | 1,792 1,244 F 548 M | 1,792 1,244 F 548 M (74.1%) | 40%/520 | 345% | IPs |
| DH-2.2 # of individuals employed six months after completing LIFT supported vocational skills training | N/A | 1,972 1,086 F 886 M | 1972 1,086 F 886 M | 60%/8,220 | 24% | Ips (Tracer studies) |
| DH-2.3 %/# of individuals successfully completing LIFT supported training with increased income from their employment or enterprise. | N/A | 3,673 2,294 F 1,379 M | 3,674 2,330 F 1,434 M (75.2%) | 70%/6,118 | 60% | IPs |

in transitioning to the new indicator measurement regime in 2019. Also, some of the IP projects had closed or were nearing closure making it impractical to effect any changes related to data collection as envisaged in the indicator reference sheets. However, some of the IPs were still able to collect the required data based on the robustness of their existing M&E systems. Ultimately, this situation also mirrors the different capacities and levels of preparedness of LIFT IPs in collecting data on the new LIFT logframe indicators. This will be a key area of focus for the programme-based M&E officers in 2020. Further reflection is also required on the indicators to determine the viability of IPs reporting on all of them granted the differences in the scope and implementation timelines of the relevant interventions.

The performance of the three **Decent Work and Labour Mobility** outcome indicators (DH 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3) relied on the outcome of tracer studies for beneficiaries of skills development trainings reported under indicator DH 1.1. The lower achievements compared to the target milestones for DH 2.2 and DH 2.3 is a result of data not being available from some of the IPs that reported output data under DH 1.1. These data gaps can be attributed to a number of factors: (1) gaps remain in M&E capacity among some implementing partners to conduct the tracing surveys in a standardised and systematic manner; (2) some of the implementing partners had concluded their trainings but planned to conduct the tracer studies to collect data at a later date given the time required for the trainees to secure jobs or establish enterprises; and (3) given the mobility of internal and international migrant workers, a significant portion of the beneficiaries trained were not available for follow-up interviews six months after training. LIFT delivered two M&E capacity building workshops for implementing partners under the Decent Work and Labour Mobility Programme to prepare them for reporting against the new Logical Framework and further training and coaching will be delivered during 2020 to improve the rigour and comprehensiveness of the tracing surveys. **Performance on the output indicators was good with most targets met or exceeded across the four thematic areas.** For instance, except for financial inclusion and nutrition, all the target milestones for policy events and publications were exceeded. The high achievements in the policy indicators, both at output and outcome levels is a further illustration of the changes in the policy environment that have allowed for enhanced engagement. A broad range of activities including trainings, workshops, meetings linked to a particular policy agenda are counted. Ultimately, this also implies that setting of accurate targets related to policy events will remain elusive.

Overall, performance of the nutrition system indicators was equally good. The target milestone for indicator NS-1.1: *# of individuals reached with LIFT supported nutrition specific interventions* was far

exceeded owing to the high number of beneficiaries reached through the community-based SBCC interventions undertaken by the IPs. Save the Children in particular was able to reach a higher than anticipated number of beneficiaries through its community-based mother support group model. Similarly, despite adjusting the target upwards for the indicator on *# of individuals reached with LIFT supported nutrition sensitive interventions*, LIFT recorded a remarkable performance by reaching 103 per cent of the target milestone. This performance is mainly attributed to LIFT's support to nutrition-sensitive agriculture and social protection programming, particularly the MCCT programmes undertaken by the Department of Social Welfare and Save the Children.

The Financial Inclusion Programme continued to perform well with nearly all targets met or exceeded. In terms of beneficiaries, it remained the largest single intervention reaching a total of 3,295,040 households.

Overall, the performance across the indicators illustrates the necessity for periodic target adjustment/revision exercises that LIFT has undertaken in the past and which it proposes to do annually during the 2019-2023 phase. One of the key constraints for target setting in 2019 was that ongoing project interventions were carried over from the 2015-2018 strategy period while new interventions had either not yet been fully designed or operationalised in most geographical locations. Even though target revisions, including for 2019 targets, were undertaken in the first quarter of 2020, the performance on some of the indicators still exceeded the revised target milestones that were set. With the 2019 performance, LIFT is arguably in a better position to provide more accurate target projections for 2020.

All the reported indicator results are based on intermediate outcomes and outputs directly linked to LIFT interventions. For this reason, the changes are largely attributable to LIFT's interventions, which encompass technical assistance, capacity development, advocacy, various types of materials inputs and facilitation of access to responsible financial services individuals and community members across Myanmar. LIFT has endeavoured to provide a gender breakdown of the results as applicable in all the indicators. The results demonstrate LIFT's commitment towards greater inclusion of females in project interventions and the deliberate targeting of women in some of the key activities such as financial inclusion and nutrition.

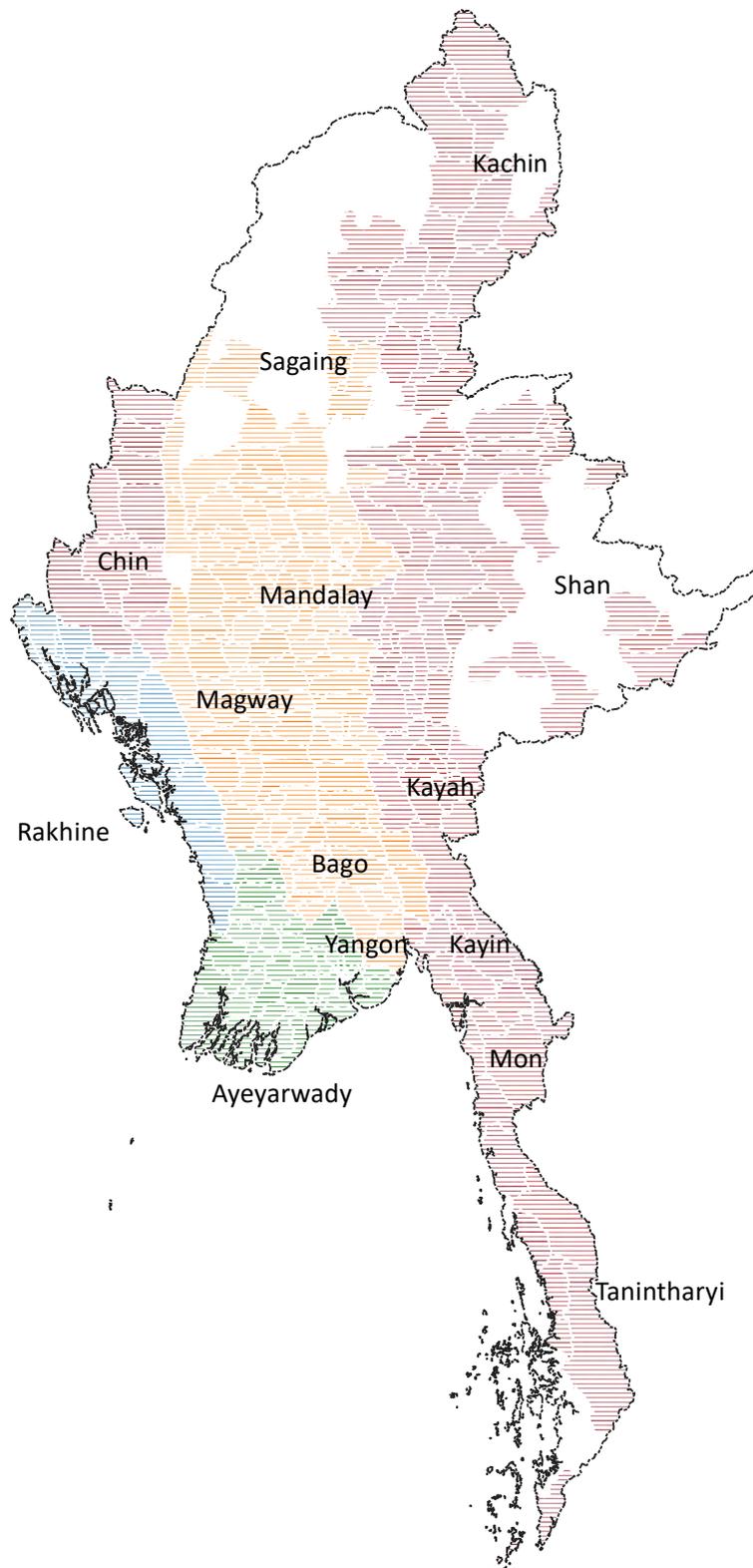


3

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THEMATIC PROGRAMMES



LIFT projects across the country (2019)

3.1 NUTRITION

Context

In spite of strong macroeconomic growth and poverty reduction over the past decade, Myanmar continues to suffer from a high prevalence of maternal and child undernutrition. While stunting, or chronic undernutrition, has declined from around 50 per cent in the 1990s to 29 per cent in 2016, there are still some 1.4 million children aged under five years who are classified as stunted. Acute undernutrition, or wasting, remains high affecting 7 per cent of preschool children. Micronutrient deficiencies are also a cause for concern. There is a high burden of anaemia among 58 per cent of children aged 6-59 months and 46 per cent of women of reproductive age, which is likely attributable in part to inadequate dietary intake of iron. The prevalence of low birth weight is 8 per cent and is an important indicator of both maternal and child nutrition since it is the direct result of poor nutrition in pregnancy.

The Myanmar Micronutrient and Food Consumption Survey report was released in February 2019. The survey covered Myanmar's 15 states and regions and included a sample of over 27,000 individuals. While some of the key indicators demonstrate some apparent improvements since the Myanmar Demographic Health Survey (DHS) was conducted in 2015-16, the survey results are not directly comparable. The 2019 survey shows that stunting rates remain high in Chin (40 per cent), Ayeyarwady (38 per cent) and Rakhine (35 per cent). Almost half of adolescent girls in Ayeyarwady are stunted, which is far higher than the national average (24 per cent) and is a cause for concern given the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition and stunting. The 2019 study found positive associations between stunting, wealth and dietary diversity. The data relating to acute malnutrition was quite different to the DHS data. This requires further investigation and comparison with other available and upcoming data. The next DHS is expected to be carried out in 2020-21. A number of other findings raise concerns including the prevalence of anaemia among school age children and pregnant women, which remains a public health concern as defined by the World Health Organization (above 40 per cent). Only 37 per cent of households are using iodized salt despite a universal iodization strategy, with the lowest uptake in Tanintharyi, Rakhine and Ayeyarwady.

Experts participating in The Post-2015 Consensus assessed that in Myanmar stunting costs between USD 2 billion and USD 6 billion every year due to lost opportunities and high health costs. Given the close relationship between nutrition and resilience, LIFT continues to collaborate with government and civil society partners through policy and programming efforts to craft an approach to addressing nutrition problems that simultaneously builds resilience and achieves long-term nutrition impacts.

Myanmar faces a number of serious threats to resilience and good nutrition, which are closely linked. A LIFT paper on nutrition and resilience published in 2019 identified four main threats in the country as: (1) climate risks and weak disaster management planning, (2) ongoing conflicts and social unrest, (3) underinvestment and underdevelopment across different states and regions in Myanmar, and (4) rapid urbanisation. Focusing on the powerful potential that nutrition holds for sustainable impact, LIFT continues to collaborate with partners to invest in nutrition and address a number of these threats by supporting the sub-national implementation of the Multi-Sectoral National Plan of Action on Nutrition (MS-NPAN) to promote broad investment and development across Myanmar's states and regions, supporting the scale-up of maternal and child cash transfer (MCCT) programming in hard-to-reach areas, investing in peri-urban programming in a context of rapid urbanisation, and expanding support to conflict-affected populations, such as those in Kachin and northern Shan State.

In 2019, Myanmar made significant progress in securing sustainable investments in nutrition at the national level. Increased government ownership of, and investment in, nutrition is apparent through the ambitious MS-NPAN, continued multi-sectoral collaboration between ministries and departments, and the allocation of government funds to resource the MCCT, particularly in some of Myanmar's most vulnerable states and regions. LIFT supported these government initiatives through its active participation and leadership in the MS-NPAN process, continued support to Myanmar's MCCT programmes, programme expansion in the South-East, and contributions to building the evidence base for effective nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific interventions. Investing in nutrition is one of the best development interventions that can be made; for every dollar spent on nutrition in the First 1,000 Days of a child's life, an average of USD 45, and in some cases as much as USD 166, is saved by eliminating the need for future development interventions.¹⁴

¹⁴ Cost-benefits analysis of nutrition interventions, Professor Susan Horton, University of Waterloo and professor John Hoddinott, Cornell University

Table 3.1: LIFT-supported nutrition projects

| Implementing partner | Project name | Main activities | Duration | Geographic coverage |
|--|--|---|-----------------------|---|
| Catholic Relief Services (CRS) | Productive Agriculture through Community Engaging (PACE) | Nutrition and nutrition-sensitive agriculture | Jun 2016 - Jun 2020 | Chin State- Falam, Thantlang, and Matupi Townships |
| Department of Social Welfare (DSW) | Implementation of a grant in Myanmar | Nutrition - MCCT | Mar 2017 – Jun 2020 | Chin State |
| Department of Social Welfare (DSW) | Support to DSW MCCT Programme in Kayin State | Nutrition - M&E | Feb 2019 – Jun 2020 | Kayin State |
| Department of Social Welfare (DSW) | Support to DSW MCCT Programme in Kayah State | Nutrition - M&E | Feb 2019 – Jun 2020 | Kayah State |
| HPA-Health Poverty Action | Improve nutrition status of the vulnerable population in conflict-affected Kachin and northern Shan | Nutrition | Jan 2020 - Dec 2022 | Northern Shan State and Kachin |
| Karana Mission Social Solidarity (KMSS) | Strategic Partnership for Civil Society Empowerment (SPaCE) | Organisation Capacity Development for KMSS | Apr 2017 – Dec 2019 | National KMSS Network operating across 14 States/Regions of Myanmar |
| Karuna Mission Social Solidarity (KMSS) | Supporting Conflict-Affected Women and Youth with Nutrition and Employment (SAFEWAY NET) | Nutrition | Jul 2019 – Jun 2022 | Kachin State - Myitkyina, Waingmaw, Moegaung, Hpakant, Bhamo, Mansi, and Momauk Townships Northern Shan State - Hsenwi, Kutkhai, and Muse Townships |
| Koe Koe Tech Co.,Ltd. | Shwe Kayi LanBawga Maymay (Shwe Maymay) | Nutrition messaging | Jun 2018 – Jun 2020 | National |
| PATH | Introduction of Fortified Rice in Myanmar | Nutrition and rice fortification | Jul 2013 – Jun 2020 | Ayeyarwady, Yangon, Bago, Mandalay Regions |
| PATH in Partnership with Terres des Hommes Italy, BKM, and BoPInc. | SMART MOVE | Food system, food fortification | Oct 2019 - Sep 2022 | Yangon peri-urban |
| Save the Children | Building Resilience In Conflict-affected areas of Northern Shan States (BRICKS) | Nutrition, social protection | Jul 2019 – Jun 2022 | Northern Shan State - Kutkai, Namkham, Kyaukme and Namtu Townships Kachin State - Mansi, and Momauk Townships |
| Save the Children | Building Resilience, Synergy and Unity for Nutrition (Bright SUN) | Nutrition - MCCT and SBCC | Dec 2015 - Sept 2019 | Ayeyarwady Delta, Labutta township |
| Save the Children | Learning, Evidence Generation, and Advocacy for catalysing Policy (LEGACY) | Nutrition - MCCT and SBCC | Dec 2015 - April 2019 | Central Dry Zone Magwe Region - Pakokku and Yesagyo Townships, Mandalay Region - Mahlaing Township |
| Save the Children | Leveraging Essential Nutrition Actions to Reduce Malnutrition (LEARN) Phase II | Nutrition - technical assistance | Dec 2016 – Nov 2019 | National |
| Save the Children | Technical Assistance to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement Chin Maternal and Child Cash Transfer Programme (TEAM MCCT) | Nutrition - Technical Support | Jul 2017 – Jan 2020 | Chin State |
| Save the Children | Healthy Choices | Nutrition, WASH, protection, decent work | Jan 2020 - Dec 2022 | Yangon peri-urban |

| Implementing partner | Project name | Main activities | Duration | Geographic coverage |
|--|---|--|----------------------|--|
| Shalom Nyein Foundation | Supporting Nutrition and Livelihoods through SGH in Kachin State, Myanmar | Nutrition, livelihoods supporting access to decent work opportunities for IDPs, self-help groups | Jan 2020 - Dec 2021 | Kachin State |
| Sustainable Development Knowledge Network (Spectrum) | Unlocking the Future Growth Potential of the Edible Insect Sector in Myanmar | Nutrition - research on edible insects | Sep 2018 - Sep 2020 | National |
| United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UNHABITAT) | A Short step from improved WASH to healthier communities | WASH | Jan 2016 - Jun 2019 | Magway Region - Pakokku and Yesagyo Townships Mandalay Region - Myingyan, Mahlaing, Tauntha and Natogyi Townships |
| WFP World Food Programme | Engaging Businesses to deliver the Government's national nutrition strategies through SUN Business network in Myanmar | Nutrition private sector, food fortification, nutrition in the workplace, food systems, food safety | Nov 2019 - Oct, 2021 | Yangon peri-urban |
| WFP World Food Programme | Scaling up fortified rice production and consumption throughout Myanmar | Nutrition -distribution of fortified rice | Aug 2017 - Jun 2020 | Rakhine State |
| World Concern | Improving the nutrition outcomes of conflict-affected people in Kachin State | Nutrition, nutrition-sensitive agriculture | Jan 2020 - Dec 2022 | Kachin State |
| World Fish | Promoting Sustainable Growth of Aquaculture in Myanmar to Improve Food Security and Income in the Ayeyarwady Delta and Central Dry Zone (MYFish-Culture-MYFC) | Aquaculture and nutrition | Sept 2015 - Dec 2019 | Ayeyarwady Delta and Central Dry Zone |
| World Vision | Growing Livelihood in Bogale | Nutrition, vocational skills, small IGA, home gardening, CBO capacity, building, and disaster risk reduction | Sep 2015 - Jun 2020 | Ayeyarwady Delta, Bogale Township |

Highlights

Policy level interventions

MS-NPAN: Preparing for sub-national implementation

The Multi-Sectoral National Plan of Action on Nutrition (MS-NPAN) was endorsed in November 2018 by the Ministers of Health and Sports (MoHS), Education (MoE), Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MSWRR) and Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI). Through collaborative efforts across multiple ministries with the support of multi-sector partners, donors and UN agencies, the MS-NPAN achieved a number of important milestones during 2019 under decisive and committed leadership by the Minister of Health and Sports.

The inception phase 2019/2020 was resourced and staffed following a collaborative effort across many stakeholders in the nutrition sector. LIFT, in collaboration with the Access to Health Fund supported the inception year through the funding of key members of the core team, mostly based in Nay Pyi Taw to support the National Nutrition Centre (NNC). The NNC and core team worked across ministries, with technical support from LIFT, Access to Health, UNICEF, the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) and others to develop the methodologies needed to carry out sub-national integrated nutrition plans.

In mid-2019, the process of sub-national level planning began with an initial workshop held in Nay Pyi Taw to familiarise representatives from all states and regions with the MS-NPAN process, and garner commitment and support across multiple sectors. A cohort of states and regions was identified for the initial rollout, prioritised by nutrition status across a number of key indicators. Cohort 1 includes Ayeyarwady Region, Kayah, Kayin, Kachin, Rakhine, Shan and Chin States and the process quickly moved to focus on sub-national planning and advocacy to ensure strong leadership at the sub-national level. The MS-NPAN methodology identified three work streams for the inception year focused on: 1) prioritisation of interventions, 2) capacity assessment and 3) monitoring and evaluation. The initial step within each state/region was to develop a risk matrix using secondary data to identify the townships most at risk of poor nutrition outcomes. As part of the state-level planning workshops, state and township stakeholders across relevant departments verified these risk levels, identified intervention packages, and reviewed the existing capacities and needs of the states and regions in terms of structures, systems, staff and resources to implement these integrated plans. A capacity development plan was then drafted and an MS-NPAN monitoring and evaluation system was established.

The first sub-national planning workshop was piloted in Ayeyarwady in July 2019. LIFT's Fund Management Office supported this workshop, as well as many of the subsequent workshops. Based on lessons from this pilot exercise, a series of sub-national planning workshops were conducted in Kayah, Chin, Kayin and southern Shan States. The multi-sector nutrition plans resulting from these workshops will be costed and submitted to the Nutrition Promotion Committees in each state and region for approval and endorsement. In 2020, the remaining states and regions will follow the same process. LIFT supported a subsequent workshop in Ayeyarwady, specifically to allow the diverse departments in MoALI to undertake a more in-depth planning process and complete additional design.

The second meeting of the National Steering Committee on Nutrition Promotion and Nutrition Sector Coordinating Group was held in October 2019 in Nay Pyi Taw. At this meeting, MS-NPAN standardised guidelines were endorsed and the Minister of Health and Sports, as chair of the steering committee, officially requested the development of MS-NPAN plan at state/regional level, encouraging many of the social ministers and health directors that were present to actively support the process.

Ministerial support for the MS-NPAN grew in 2019, as the Ministry of Natural Resources and Mining joined MoHS, MoALI, MoE and MSWRR as a fifth member of the MS-NPAN steering committee. Additional stakeholders became more engaged in the process, including LIFT Fund Board members. Future plans to engage Parliamentary Committees, highlighting their crucial role in the sustainability of a multi-sector response to poor nutrition in Myanmar, will take place in February 2020. The General Administration Department and the Department of Finance and Budget were identified as having essential roles in delivering a successful multi-sectoral response to address malnutrition.

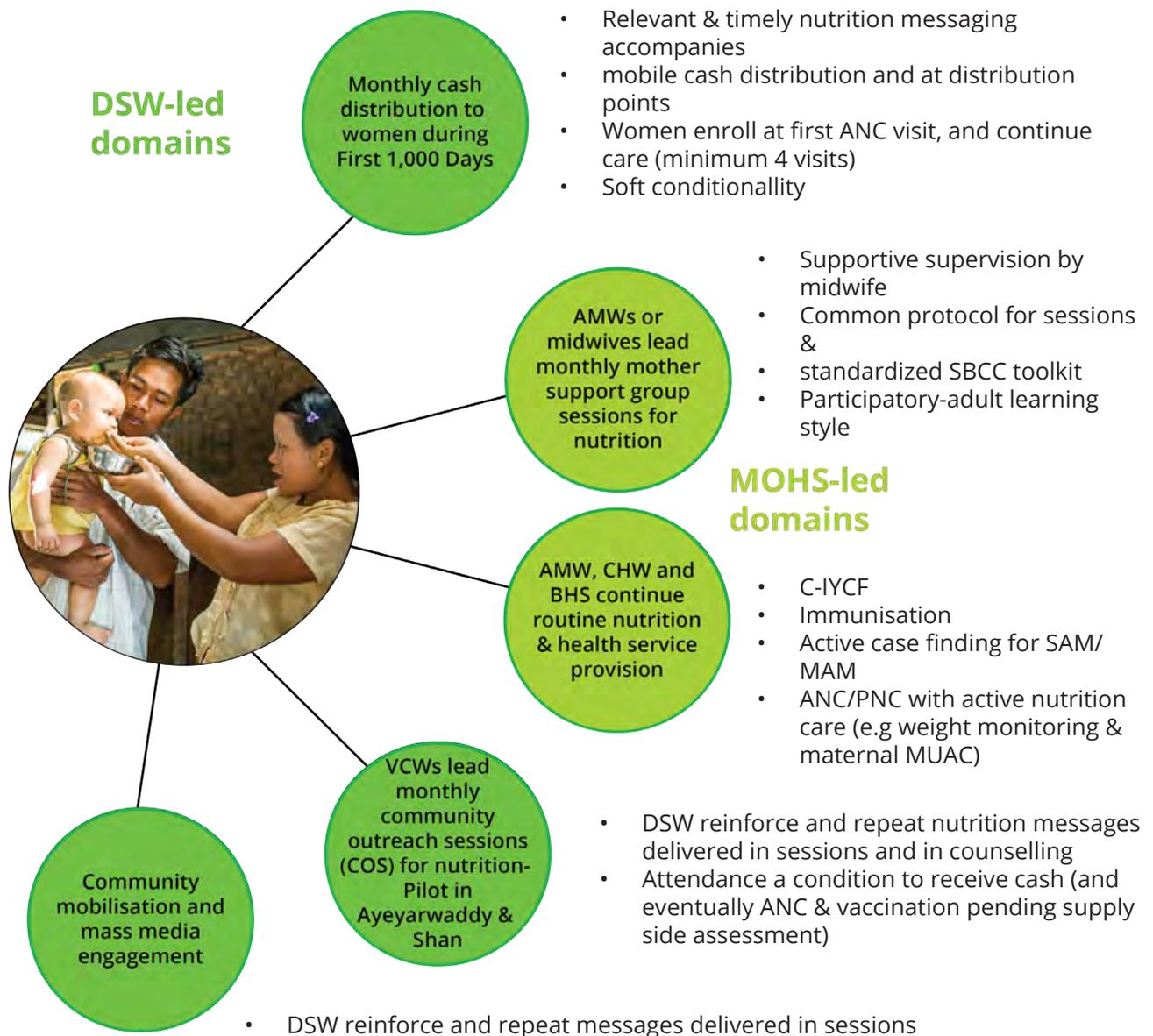
There were a number of significant achievements and successes of the inception phase of MS-NPAN. The focus of the next year will be the costed and prioritised action plans for the remaining states and regions, the fiscal planning associated with Cohorts 1 and 2 and plans to ensure effective implementation and monitoring of the multi-sector plans. The MS-NPAN core team will continue to support the state/regional Nutrition Promotion Committees and state/regional Planning Focal Teams to operationalise these vital groups to lead the process and to strengthen coordination mechanisms at the national and township levels.

Social and behaviour change (SBC) for nutrition: advancing policy and programming

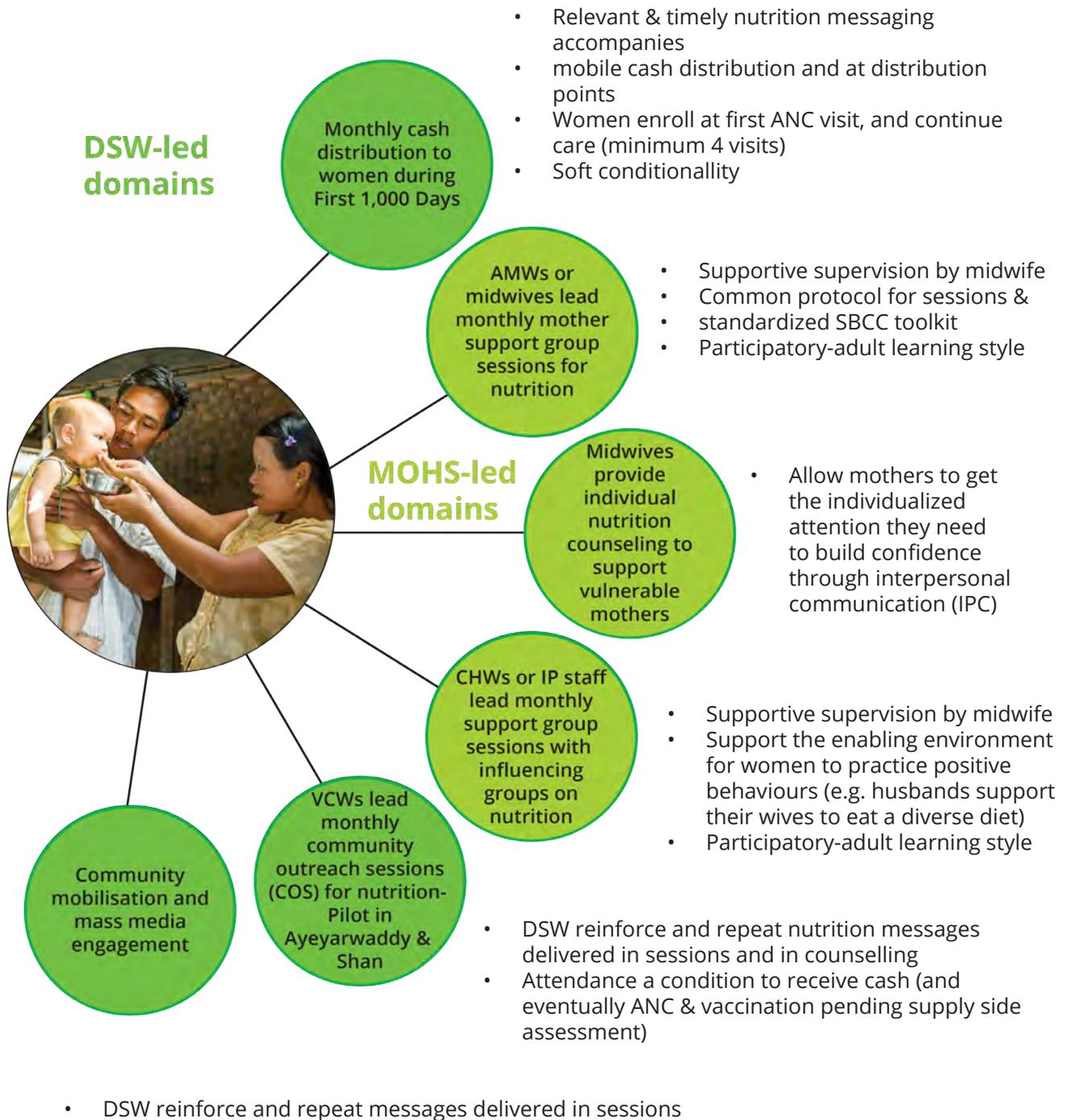
To understand the extent to which LIFT-funded maternal and child cash transfer (MCCT) programmes in Myanmar have been successful in changing behaviours and improving nutrition outcomes, as well as to develop recommendations for future policy and programming, LIFT developed a paper and technical brief, Social and Behaviour Change for Nutrition in Maternal and Child Cash Transfer Programmes - Lessons for Policy and Programming in Myanmar, (<https://www.lift-fund.org/technical-brief-SBCC-MCCT-programmes-Myanmar>). The paper and brief are based on a review of available evidence, including global research, programme data from LIFT-funded

interventions, and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders. The paper proposes a common programme model for the national MCCT programme that includes cash transfers and social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) elements, informed by evidence. There are two versions of the model, one of which is comprehensive while the other is a minimum functional design in the context of limited resources. The proposed common model, which is based on consultations with the Department of Public Health and the Department of Social Welfare and other stakeholders, takes into consideration the core elements of a MCCT programme, global evidence on the characteristics of a successful MCCT programme, as well as Myanmar’s unique operational context.

Myanmar MCCT Programme Model 1: Minimum Functional Design



Myanmar MCCT Programme Model 2: Comprehensive Design



Key findings from the paper include:

- » LIFT-funded programmes, particularly the MCCT project in Myanmar's Dry Zone, contributed to the global evidence base for 'what works' in MCCT programmes. We know, for example, that MCCT programmes that combine cash distribution during the First 1,000 Days with social and behaviour change (SBC) approaches and improved access to health services can improve a number of nutrition behaviours and achieve meaningful reductions in stunting.
- » Cash alone has some impact on nutrition, but unreliably so. This important fact reveals that something more than cash is required to ensure that these programmes 'work' for nutrition. While cash is certainly a versatile and useful intervention tool for improving child nutrition, accumulating evidence reveals that certain other programme design elements, including an SBC element, must be in place for it to work.
- » Cash can support nutrition by: (1) pairing cash with innovative, culturally-relevant and effective SBC approaches, (2) ensuring that strong linkages exist connecting beneficiaries with health services, and (3) ensuring that programme design characteristics enable women to adopt positive behaviours and use the cash productively.
- » MCCT programmes supported by LIFT use multiple modalities to support behaviour change, including modalities on interpersonal communication modalities, social change and community mobilisation, and advocacy. While useful information and insights can be taken from project documents and reports, evidence needs to be gathered more systematically on which modalities work, how, and why.
- » The paper identifies a series of 10 key areas to prioritise for joint action among partners, including the government. These relate to improving collaboration and coordination among all stakeholders, strengthening the national-level programme strategy for improving nutrition outcomes, improving the effectiveness of SBC modalities for better programme quality, using proven methods and approaches to harness cash for nutrition outcomes, and improving monitoring and learning to better track beneficiaries' adoption of key health and nutrition behaviours.

Rice Fortification

The LIFT-funded rice fortification project implemented by PATH saw a great number of successes in 2019. The project works through a food systems approach that integrates policy with supply-side and demand-side interventions. The project continued to work closely with the National Nutrition Centre (NNC) and the Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) as well as with a range of private sector actors. Fortified rice is one of the prioritised interventions within the MS-NPAN.

The Rice Fortification Working Group (RFWG) was established in 2015 and is chaired by the Department of Public Health. It continues to be an important multi-sector group with a strong commitment to ensuring fortified rice is reaching those who will most benefit from it.

In March 2019, the *Technical Guidance on Rice Fortification* was launched by the Union Minister for Health and Sports. This, along with key resources from PATH, were used as training tools to strengthen the knowledge and capacity of key players across government and the private sector, and to strengthen the capacity of the National Nutrition Centre's laboratory to conduct micronutrient content analysis. At the launch, the Minister of Health and Sports gave an intra-ministerial order to begin using fortified rice at nursing and midwifery schools across

the country. Further advocacy efforts are required to support the necessary budget allocation needed to implement this approach as so far just over 25 per cent of all nursing and midwifery schools are using fortified rice.

The Rice Fortification Working Group (RFWG) provides a forum for government and private sector actors to share research findings, to assess the way forward for effective and widespread access to fortified rice, and advocate for the approval of the Policy on *Fortified Rice* to be prioritised. PATH is exploring ways to advance the approval of this policy including exploration of whether the RFWG should be better linked with the Nutrition Sector Coordination Group under the Development Assistance Coordination Unit, the highest-level body chaired by the Office of the President, to allow higher-level engagement and coordination in policy endorsement and implementation.

In October 2019, as part of a review process the Deputy Director General of the Department of Public Health, gave his commitment to continuing rice fortification in Myanmar and PATH facilitated the partnership between the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) and the National Nutrition Centre to hand over the fortified rice initiative. The chairperson of the MRF committed to rice fortification being included in MRF's future plans to build an online library for public awareness and business interests.

System-level interventions

Maternal and child cash transfers: a sustainable investment

LIFT's investment in maternal and child cash transfer (MCCT) programmes in Myanmar started in 2014 in Rakhine State with the Tat Lan Programme. In 2015, small pilots began in the Delta and Dry Zone designed to test the effectiveness and feasibility of different models and approaches for MCCT interventions. In 2019, these three LIFT-supported MCCT projects, implemented by Save the Children, came to an end. Over five years these MCCT projects in Rakhine, Ayeyarwady and the Dry Zone covered 722 villages and over 28,000 women beneficiaries. This investment, which provided evidence to guide policy and practice in Myanmar, ultimately led to a commitment by the Myanmar Government's Department of Social Welfare (DSW) to implement the MCCT programme nationally, beginning in Chin, Rakhine, Kayin and Kayah States and the Naga Self-Administered Zone with plans to expand into the Ayeyarwady Region and Shan and Kachin States by the end of 2020.

In 2019, LIFT funded operational grants for the universal provision of MCCT combined with social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) in Chin, Kayin and Kayah States. The DSW led the statewide Chin MCCT programme with LIFT's support since 2017. Initially, LIFT funded cash payments as well as operational costs; however, the Government allocated funding for cash payments after September 2019. The operational grant from LIFT continues until 2020.

Since 2017, the government's contribution to MCCT rose from almost zero to USD 29 million, with a further USD 22 million committed for 2020. Taking into account figures for 2020, LIFT will have helped leverage 2.4 times its investment from government funds to a total of USD 51 million over three years. LIFT continued to support the scale-up of MCCT through supporting DSW operationally and by improving links with the Ministry of Health and Sports (MoHS) to strengthen the impact cash has on nutrition outcomes through a SBCC approach promoting the uptake of health services and the adoption of key nutrition, health and hygiene behaviours by MCCT beneficiaries.

Throughout the process of national expansion, LIFT continues to be a leader in promoting collaboration among major technical stakeholders and government departments, convening technical discussions to advance the conceptual understanding and design of crucial components including SBCC, MEAL frameworks and management information systems, among others. LIFT continues to partner with DSW and provides technical and financial support to make further strides towards realising their vision of implementing a universal cash transfer programme

for mothers and children in the First 1,000 Days with a specific focus on conflict-affected areas. LIFT continues to support the DSW-led MCCT programmes in Chin, Kayin and Kayah, with the potential to extend to Kachin, as DSW further scales up its MCCT programmes. LIFT seeks partners to support DSW in pursuing efforts to achieve universal coverage in all government and non-government-controlled areas. To strengthen the critical SBCC component of the MCCT, LIFT leverages Access to Health's relationships and partnerships with MoHS in support of high-quality health service delivery that supports the achievement of positive nutrition outcomes among MCCT beneficiaries.

MCCT in Chin State

From the time the Chin MCCT began in June 2017 to the end of 2019, Chin MCCT recorded **32,898 registered beneficiaries** receiving a complete package of MCCT and SBCC interventions. The government assumed financial responsibility for continued bi-monthly cash payments to beneficiaries from the fourth quarter of 2019. In July 2019, a *Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) Strategy and Action Plan* for Chin State was submitted to the Union-level Ministers of Health and Sports, and Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and was approved. The SBCC Action Plan serves as a template for other states and regions, including Kayin and Kayah, to ensure government-led social and behaviour change approaches occur alongside cash distribution to maximise its impact.

Since 2017, LIFT has funded Save the Children in partnership with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Danish Red Cross (DRC) to provide technical assistance to the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) in their implementation of SBCC activities and monitoring and learning in Chin State. The TEAM MCCT project continued in 2019 and worked to identify entry points for social marketing and community mobilisation and supported the government to foster an enabling environment within which positive nutrition outcomes for vulnerable children could be achieved.

In line with the SBCC Action Plan, TEAM MCCT supported auxiliary midwives and community health workers (CHWs) to form and maintain mother-to-mother support groups in communities. LIFT's partners supported the development of MoHS-endorsed mother-to-mother support group facilitation manuals and other SBCC materials, and peer exchange and joint supervision visits for government staff and volunteers in all nine Chin townships. These activities contributed to the forthcoming rollout of the government's community infant and young child feeding (C-IYCF) curriculum for basic health staff.

LIFT's partners closely collaborated with the Access to Health grantee to support health system

strengthening for nutrition. The monitoring and learning component of the project established a joint monitoring mechanism with DSW to complement and support DSW case managers responsible for monitoring delivery of the MCCT programme.

In 2019, TEAM MCCT completed all four rounds of project monitoring with government and key stakeholders' involvement, as well as a lot quality assurance sampling (LQAS) in three townships. As planned, the monitoring tools were then handed over to DSW in July 2019, after which DSW successfully led a post-distribution monitoring review workshop to expand the use of these tools to other states and regions where MCCT programmes are being delivered. TEAM MCCT trained DSW's case managers on data collection using KoBo and conducting key informant interviews.

Post-distribution monitoring results in Chin State

The objective of the post-distribution monitoring (PDM) is to provide regular data that decision makers can use to identify potential risks and make informed decisions on programme improvement and any course corrections required. The PDM also records beneficiaries' perceptions about the programme processes and how they are spending the money.

During 2019, the third round of PDM data showed very positive results:

- » 97 per cent of respondents collected regular bi-monthly payments of MMK 30,000 (USD 20) after they registered for the programme
- » More than 96 per cent received pre-disbursement information of the cash transfer
- » Almost all the mothers said they made the decisions on how the cash was spent. Only 1 per cent of mothers said their husband made these decisions.
- » About 60 per cent of respondents said they bought more food for themselves; 53 per cent said they spent the cash on more food for their children, and 30 per cent said they spent the MCCT cash on buying more food for their families.
- » About two-thirds of the respondents said midwives were the main health care providers for their villages and 37 per cent said auxiliary midwives provided health care
- » More than 83 per cent of the MCCT beneficiaries received antenatal care. Among them, 42 per cent had four antenatal care visits during their pregnancies. More than two-thirds of respondents delivered their children assisted by a skilled birth attendant at a health care centre. About 28 per cent were assisted by a midwife.
- » Among the mothers who attended the SBCC sessions, 60 per cent said they knew more about the importance of eating a diverse range of foods. More than 55 per cent of mothers knew more about exclusive breastfeeding and infant feeding practices as a result of the sessions.

Overall, the PDM results of 2019 show that MCCT programme implementation in all Chin State townships improved over time because of improved coordination and collaboration. However, further improvements in coordination between township and state government departments is required on monitoring and action plan responses.

MCCT in Kayah and Kayin States

Since October 2018, LIFT has supported the rollout of the Department of Social Welfare (DSW)'s MCCT programme in Kayah and Kayin States. The programme consists of three main components: 1) maternal and child cash transfers, 2) social and behaviour change communication, and 3) institutional capacity strengthening. LIFT supported operational costs for the first year of implementation, and a baseline survey. LIFT anticipates providing future financial support for the SBCC component in these states through LIFT's South-East Programme. In Kayah, there were four rounds of cash transfers in 2019. By the end of the year, 10,647 registered women received transfers. Four rounds of cash transfer were also made in Kayin in 2019, reaching **40,791 beneficiaries**.

In July 2019, drawing on its Chin State MCCT experience, the government held workshops in Kayah and Kayin States to share what they had learned relating to social and behaviour change communication (SBCC). This support equipped Kayin and Kayah to create state-level SBCC plans, which were followed by the development of eight 'micro plans'. The 'micro plans' detailed SBCC activities and approaches to be implemented and included plans for ethnic health organisations and the Civil Health and Development Network to deliver SBCC in hard-to-reach, non-government-controlled areas.

MCCT baseline surveys in Kayin and Kayah States

As part of its effort to support the DSW in the generation of robust MCCT evidence through research, monitoring and evaluation, LIFT supported Community Partners International (CPI) in partnership with Valid International to conduct a baseline survey in government-controlled and non-government-controlled areas in Kayin and Kayah States. The baseline, conducted in August and September 2019, included a population-based survey and a cohort study of mothers and children under the age of five. The population-based survey was designed to assess key household characteristics and maternal and child health and nutrition indicators at the beginning of the MCCT programme in Kayin and Kayah State. The surveys were planned in collaboration with DSW and MoHS and included a capacity building component to enable DSW to conduct future surveys.

The baseline surveys provided a number of insights into the Kayin and Kayah contexts for MCCT programming.

In **Kayin State**, the baseline was characterised by significant disparities, with poor and hard-to-reach areas faring the worst on a number of critical indicators. For example, childhood stunting in Kayin is as high as 40 per cent in hard-to-reach areas and as low as 16 per cent in urban areas, compared to the national average of 29 per cent. In terms of wasting, weight for height Z scores in the state are as high as 7 per cent in urban areas and 6 per cent in hard-to-reach areas among children under five. Children in the poorest quintile and in hard-to-reach households are most likely to suffer from low minimum meal frequency and minimum dietary diversity. Across the board, few children have minimum acceptable diets: 12 per cent of children in urban areas, 19 per cent in rural and 10 per cent in hard-to-reach areas. Alarming, only 3 per cent of children in the poorest households receive a minimum acceptable diet.

The rate of exclusive breastfeeding is overall higher than the national average, though still low: 34 per cent in Kayin vs. 29 per cent nationally. Fewer boy children were exclusively breastfed than girls. However boys tended to be breastfed for longer than girls, suggesting differing IYCF practices for boys and girls. Water, sanitation and hygiene are critical underlying determinants of undernutrition. Predictably, hard-to-reach and poorer households were more likely to drink water from unimproved sources and were more likely to practice open defecation.

Kayah State has some of the highest rates of child undernutrition in Myanmar, specifically stunting and underweight. Children in hard-to-reach areas are the worst affected, according to the results of the baseline survey. Child stunting rates in Kayah State are as high as 48 per cent in hard-to-reach areas and as low as 17.4 per cent in urban areas. There is a geographical gradient in childhood stunting with prevalence progressively and significantly increasing from urban to rural to hard-to-reach areas. Wasting by weight for height Z score (WHZ) in Kayah state is as high as 6 per cent in rural areas and as low as 3.8 per cent in urban and hard-to-reach areas. There is a significantly higher proportion of boys who are wasted compared to girls.

Child health and nutrition-related indicators reveal that in Kayah State infant and young child feeding practices are poor and access to child health services, such as immunisation, is low. In the poorest quintile, only 15.6 per cent of children are exclusively breastfed. The figure is twice as high (33 per cent) among the wealthiest, though this is still low. Children receiving minimum acceptable diets correlates with wealth, with 39 per cent of children in the wealthiest households receiving a minimum acceptable diet compared to only 5.8 per cent of children in the poorest households. Maternal health, measured by services accessed by mothers during pregnancy, at birth and after birth, also indicate a correlation with wealth. Overall, most mothers who access maternal

health services pay for those services and poorer households are less able to do so.

Food insecurity, measured by food consumption, coping strategies, household food expenditure share, are not at critical levels for the Kayah State on aggregate. However, wealth disparities in the food security indicators support the idea that poverty is a driver of child undernutrition in Kayah State. Water, sanitation and hygiene indicators, that also impact on child health and nutrition, are acceptable on aggregate; however, they are much worse for poorer households.

Randomised control trial findings of the Dry Zone MCCT

LIFT supported Save the Children to implement a MCCT project in the Dry Zone from May 2016 to April 2019. The project aimed to improve nutrition outcomes in the First 1,000 days through the provision of a monthly cash transfer and implementation of a number of social and behaviour change activities to support the adoption of positive maternal, infant and young child nutrition practices. As part of this project, Innovations Poverty Action (IPA) conducted a randomised control trial (RCT) to measure the impact of the MCCT on the health and nutrition outcomes of target beneficiaries and test the effectiveness of different programme models. Specifically, the RCT tested the impact of cash alone on project outcomes compared to cash plus social and behaviour change communications (SBCC) activities.

The RCT results were published in 2019. The RCT used a robust methodology to demonstrate that maternal and child cash transfer, when combined with SBCC, can have a significant and positive impact on childhood stunting. In the cash plus SBCC intervention cohort there was a 4 per cent reduction in the proportion of stunted children (6-23 months old) from 30 per cent to 25 per cent. This impact on stunting was significantly greater than the cash only group. The RCT findings also demonstrated significant, positive impacts on several immediate and underlying determinants of nutrition. There was a significant increase in the number of children being breastfed exclusively (from 50 to 89 per cent) and those meeting the minimum dietary diversity score (from 34 to 53 per cent), which led to a significant increase in minimum adequate diet (from 25 to 46 per cent).

Both treatment groups - those receiving the cash only and those receiving cash plus SBCC - increased their expenditure on food items. However, the addition of behaviour change interventions increased the positive impact that this increased expenditure had on nutrition outcomes for the cash plus SBCC group. Another important result was in the adoption of positive health seeking behaviours, specifically the proportion of mothers attending at least four antenatal care visits. There was a 14 per cent point

increase in this outcome for women in the cash plus SBCC group and a 9 per cent point increase for women in the cash only group.

LIFT hosted an event in Nay Pyi Taw in November 2019 to share the results of the RCT with the MSWRR and MoHS and to provide an opportunity for relevant stakeholders to engage with the results. Representatives from the Department of Social Welfare, National Nutrition Centre and Health Literacy and Promotion Unit, donors, UNICEF and the World Bank attended. The completion of the RCT study is an important milestone in building Myanmar's evidence base to inform the national MCCT programme. The findings also contribute to the global evidence base, which supports the value of putting regular and timely cash transfers into the hands of women, alongside comprehensive measures to change behaviours and practices during the First 1,000 Days.

LEARN 2's final evaluation

The evaluation of the second phase of the LEARN Project (LEARN 2), implemented by Save the Children from 2016-2019, was released in 2019. The major objective of LEARN was to respond to technical assistance needs of LIFT implementing partners (IPs), which the project excelled at, working with 45 LIFT IPs and giving technical assistance to other interested organisations. LEARN played an important role in increasing IPs' knowledge about nutrition-specific interventions including optimal maternal, infant, and young child nutrition practices through training and capacity building exercises. LEARN also built IPs' capacity in social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) through training, support for formative research, and provision of materials adaptable to different cultural and language contexts. The project produced high-quality training curriculum and SBCC materials, which can continue to be used by development partners into the future.

Since 2014, LEARN led in the Myanmar Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP) as host of the Secretariat for the SUN Civil Society Alliance (CSA). Through the SUN CSA, LEARN supported the MSP through networking, governance and advocacy, in particular through its active engagement in the MS-NPAN process, building the capacity of IPs to engage in advocacy, and in supporting the National Nutrition Centre to lead the Becoming Breastfeeding Friendly Initiative, in partnership with Yale University. Overall, LEARN was highly effective in fulfilling its mandate to provide technical assistance on nutrition to LIFT IPs and engage in advocacy activities at the national level. LEARN contributed positively to national-level discussions to scale-up nutrition across sectors, at all levels, and among relevant stakeholders. As host of the SUN CSA Secretariat, LEARN showed leadership in galvanising support from civil society and organisations, including LIFT IPs, to address malnutrition in Myanmar. LIFT is considering support for a third phase III of this initiative, focusing

particularly on the provision of technical assistance to new partners, CSOs and ethnic service providers) in conflict-affected and peri-urban areas.

Fortified rice - working with the private sector

PATH continued to work closely with rice millers and private sector partners including the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) to strengthen the supply side of the fortified rice value chain. Throughout 2019, 74 metric tonnes of fortified rice were produced every month.

Of the 18 value chain actors that PATH works with, 50 per cent, including fortified rice kernel producers, a fabricator and the millers who are producing the fortified rice itself reported increased income from operating in the value chain during 2019. The millers who were successful in fortified rice production and distribution made significant efforts in marketing and retailer promotion. One also diversified production and is now producing fortified rice porridge. Rice millers who were less successful in fortified rice production were not the owners of their rice mills and were less motivated to invest in the marketing and distribution needed to generate good returns on investment. PATH is in discussion with the Myanmar Rice Federation about how to revitalise some of these actors and plans to involve the National Nutrition Centre and the Ministry of Health and Sports.

PATH ensures that this investment in the private sector is sustainable through supporting the Myanmar Rice Federation with fortified rice production technology, and associated processes and procedures around manufacturing and hygiene, support for the Food and Drug Association registration process, and quality assurance processes.

A significant achievement of the fortified rice work in 2019 relates to efforts to reduce the price of the end product. PATH worked with the private sector to reduce the price of the fortified rice kernels through premix supply diversification and a change in the blending ratio. The results of these trials were shared with the World Food Programme and the National Nutrition Centre to generate the evidence that the fortified rice kernel quality is ready for a change in the blending from 2:98 to 1:99. This, along with continued efforts in 2020 for the endorsement of the fortified rice policy and efforts to increase demand are expected to contribute to increased reach of fortified rice to the most nutritionally vulnerable.

Household-level interventions

Nutrition-sensitive agriculture

Investments in nutrition-sensitive agriculture that address the underlying causes of undernutrition is important to improving nutrition outcomes in vulnerable rural communities. Growing evidence has disproven the previously held assumption that agriculture interventions will by default improve nutrition outcomes through increased production of food for either consumption or income. A more accurate way of framing agriculture investments is that they have great potential to improve (or undermine) nutrition outcomes and that these investments reach their fullest potential when deliberately designed and planned with the intention of having a positive impact on nutrition.¹⁵

In late-2018, LIFT conducted a review of the project portfolio examining the extent to which LIFT and IPs had improved their nutrition-sensitive agriculture project designs over time. A number of past projects could have been nutrition-sensitive had they measured certain relevant outcomes or made project adaptations or additions. LIFT and partners have clearly matured in their understanding and approaches to nutrition-sensitive agriculture resulting in a strengthened focus on nutrition-sensitive agriculture in LIFT's strategy and programmes. More IPs are linking agriculture and improved nutrition in their project rationales, theory of change models, and measurement frameworks.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS), in partnership with Karuna Myanmar Social Solidarity (KMSS), implements the Production Agriculture through Community Engagement (PACE) project in 60 villages in Falam, Thantlang and Matupi Townships of Chin State. PACE supported smallholder farmers to increase knowledge on improved agriculture practices for nutrition-sensitive crops including maize and beans, diversified home gardens, and essential nutrition and hygiene actions for mothers in the First 1,000 days.

To understand the impact of increased market access and improved production diversity on nutrition outcomes, CRS conducted an outcome study in PACE project villages and non-project villages. According to the findings, households participating in PACE experienced a number of benefits that others did not. For dietary diversity, the study found that the dietary diversity score of pregnant and breastfeeding women, as well as for children 6-23 months, was higher in project villages (5.67 vs 4.7 for women in project vs. non project villages and 4.76 vs. 3.42 for children in project vs. non project villages). In terms of animal-source food consumption, PACE households fared better, with 77 per cent of pregnant and

breastfeeding women and 82 per cent of children 6-23 months consuming animal sourced food. In non-PACE project villages, those figures were only 63 per cent for pregnant and breastfeeding women and 45 per cent for children 6-23 months. Similarly in production diversity, PACE villages have on average 2.3 additional crop species (7.6) compared to non-project villages (5.3 species).

Photo - A home gardener supported by the PACE project in Chin State harvests her crop



The study also correlated remoteness, defined by travel distance to markets, with diet diversity and consumption of animal-sourced food. Based on these findings, to address nutrition problems, it was decided that supporting market development for nutritious food was more appropriate for villages within 72.5 minutes travel distance from markets while production diversity was more relevant for villages beyond 72.5 minutes travel time from markets.

Major improvements were seen in a number of outcomes over the course of the PACE project. Baseline and endline findings revealed that the percentage of targeted households planting a variety of nutritious vegetables, fruits and pulses increased from 10 per cent to 40 per cent. In project villages, 95 per cent of pregnant and breastfeeding women participated in home gardening trainings. As a result, these households planted a greater variety of crops in the garden during the dry season, increasing from 2.7 types of crops at baseline to 6.8 by the end of the project.

The final evaluation of the project concluded that the project was highly relevant for Chin State because its two components identified and mitigated supply-side and demand-side barriers to poverty, food security and good nutrition. This is important for Chin State because it has the highest prevalence in Myanmar

of short stature in women of reproductive age and stunting in children younger than five years.

The evaluation found ample evidence that the project was effective in improving outcome indicators. There was an impressive uptake in households' use of improved agronomic practices, from 2 per cent to 49 per cent. Improved seed selection practices were adopted by almost three-quarters of households. New methods of hermetic (air-tight) storage of maize, pulse, and vegetable seeds were embraced by nearly all households resulting in noticeable reductions in losses during storage of maize seed (from 26 per cent to 7 per cent) and pulse seed (from 20 per cent to 6 per cent). Grain losses also decreased impressively; maize grain loss declined from 39 per cent to 11 per cent, (a 70 per cent reduction in loss), and pulse grain loss declined from 32 per cent to 14 per cent (a 56 per cent reduction in loss). This resulted in improved food security and income for households.

The project achieved excellent results in improving the proportion of pregnant and breastfeeding women and children consuming diverse diets. At the start of the project only 14 per cent of women were consuming a diverse diet and at the end of 2018, 75 per cent of women were consuming a diverse diet. For children aged 6-23 months, consumption of a diverse diet increased from 20 per cent to 85 per cent.

An unintended but positive outcome of the project is the complementary role it played for the DSW-implemented universal maternal and child cash transfer (MCCT) programme in Chin State. The PACE project beneficiaries reported they were using the cash transfers to purchase one or two eggs per day and chickpeas which, with vegetables from their garden and rice, made it possible for mothers to provide at least four food groups to their children daily.

WASH and Nutrition

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 50 per cent of malnutrition is associated with recurrent bouts of diarrhoea, often resulting from unsafe water, insufficient sanitation, and inadequate hygiene. Investment in hygiene promotion, sanitation, and water services is among the most cost-effective ways of reducing child mortality. In order to reduce hunger and improve nutrition it is necessary to have a multi-sectoral approach and integration of WASH and nutrition can bring greater change.

UN HABITAT implemented the *A Short Step from Improved WASH to Healthier Communities* project that aimed to provide communities with safe drinking water, improved sanitation and high-quality hygiene education to give them a basis for healthy and productive lives. The project proposed an integrated approach with behaviour change communication

and provision of safe drinking water and sanitation systems.



The project contributed to LIFT's Strategy Outcome 3: Improved nutrition of women, men and children, and to the Dry Zone Programme Outcome 5: Fewer children are stunted. The project was implemented in 221 villages across six townships of Dry Zone (Yesagyo, Pakokku, Myingyan, Natogyi, Mahlaing and Taungtha) directly benefiting 178,167 people.

The project came to an end in mid-2019 and achieved the following key results: 2,454 people from 221 villages were trained and played an important role in improving hygiene awareness and hygiene practices by working together to reduce open defecation, supporting communities to become free of water and faecal-borne diseases, and empowering communities to be responsible for the sustainability of their hygiene practices, and for improving their water and sanitation facilities. Most of the volunteers were women (63 per cent) and their involvement and commitment were critical to improving the nutrition outcomes and subsequent health of their families and community. By the end of the project 96 per cent of people were practicing zero open defecation in all 212 villages.

Almost 8,000 households gained access to latrines during the 42 months of the project's implementation: 28 per cent of these households were subsidised by the project to construct the latrines and 72 per cent built their latrines themselves after learning about the importance of having sanitary latrines and its benefits on health, including nutrition outcomes of small children and pregnant women. Now, 96 per cent of households in the 221 villages have latrines.

The project supported 168,656 people (36,140 households) to gain access to improved drinking water through construction of different water supply systems in each village. Household water consumption increased as a result from 8.5 gallons (30 litres) per day to 20 gallons (76 litres) per day for drinking and domestic use.



The water infrastructure is also benefiting households' nutrition as people use the water in their home gardens. In the 209 villages where there was project support for water, 183 villages had home gardens. As of June 2019, there were around 9,700 home gardens, representing almost one-third of households who acquired water infrastructure.

Inclusion of people with disabilities

From the beginning of implementation, the project considered inclusion of people with disabilities. During community action plan workshops, 705 people with disabilities participated.

The project identified more than 3,000 people with disabilities who benefited from the water construction activities. For these people, household water pipes were installed closer to the home to make access easier and more water was provided for personal hygiene.

Latrines and water infrastructure were constructed with ramps and handrails to make them more accessible for people with physical impediments. Over the project period, UN-Habitat introduced three latrine designs for people with disabilities and helped build 171 latrines with supporting features to make the latrine more accessible and comfortable.

Resilience-building in Kachin and northern Shan State for better nutrition outcomes

LIFT's programme in Kachin and northern Shan builds resilience through improving the nutritional status of vulnerable groups, using existing community structures to foster a strong base for social and behaviour change approaches for improved nutrition. LIFT-funded projects in the Kachin and northern Shan programme implement integrated nutrition interventions that address the context-specific drivers of malnutrition. These projects respond to the complex contexts in both government- and non-government-controlled areas, where there are varying levels of access to services and markets.

Supporting the Ministry of Health and Sports and ethnic health organisations to implement nutrition interventions under the MS-NPAN, partners are improving linkages to health and nutrition services in areas where access to these services is a limiting factor to positive nutrition outcomes. Implementing partners are finding innovative ways to support improvements in diet quality and food access through increased access and availability of local and fortified foods, and through working with vendors in hard-to-reach areas, such as in communities who have been displaced or affected by conflict.

Geographically integrated with the Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems Programme and aligned with the projects under the Decent Work theme, the LIFT-funded nutrition projects in Kachin and northern Shan State Programme are designed to challenge poverty and improve nutrition outcomes in the First 1,000 days period in remote and restricted communities. This will be achieved through increasing household income and assets, investing in inclusive value chain and labour markets, and empowering and including women. LIFT is engaging local, long-term actors in these areas to reduce the vulnerability of households and individuals to shocks, stresses and risks. Through the diversification of income and food sources for vulnerable households, as well as through nutrition interventions targeting women and children in the First 1,000 Days, LIFT programmes will strengthen the resilience of vulnerable and marginalised communities.

LIFT's nutrition approach in peri-urban Yangon

The cyclical nature of poor nutrition, vulnerability and resilience will be addressed in LIFT's Peri-Urban Programme through LIFT partner interventions responding to a number of the underlying causes of malnutrition, as well as improving opportunities for decent work and safe migration. Many of the projects selected under the LIFT Peri-Urban Programme focus on internal migrants and in particular on youth and adolescent girls, who are vulnerable to trafficking, labour exploitation and are at risk of anaemia and malnutrition. Targeting young, female migrant workers is an important way to ensure that one of

the most nutritionally vulnerable groups in urban areas are prepared for a healthy First 1,000 Days journey as mothers in the future.

The food systems approach of the Peri-Urban Programme recognises that many of the key barriers vulnerable migrant workers face in achieving good nutrition relate to a lack of access to a safe, good quality diet. To respond to these barriers, interventions need to take into account multiple aspects of the food chain, including supply, food safety, quality, and consumption. Partners are working with street vendors and small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to improve food safety, food quality, knowledge of good and appropriate nutrition, and also to facilitate access to convenient nutritious food, particularly among factory workers who do not have the facilities or the time to buy and prepare food.

The Peri-Urban Programme harnesses private sector strategies to prevent micronutrient deficiencies of vulnerable groups by increasing the availability of fortified rice to the most marginalised. The PATH project takes an integrated approach that combines service delivery through a local partner with strengthening nutrition knowledge and practices and addresses both supply-side and demand-side of increasing consumption of fortified rice along with efforts to influence the policy environment. Through working with rice millers and SMEs the consortium of organisations will focus on value chain support for sustainable distribution, packaging, marketing, and retailing of fortified rice to increase the availability and consumption by the bottom of the pyramid.

Engagement with the private sector is central to the overall programme, working with employers to improve working conditions as well as focusing on health and nutrition in the workplace. This is one of the four key themes of the SUN Business Network (SBN). In addition to food fortification and nutrition in the workplace, the SBN focuses on food safety and improving nutrition knowledge among businesses and consumers to support a change in nutrition practices. The SBN supports small- and medium-sized enterprises with opportunities that address the nutrition and social needs of peri-urban residents, including improved access to nutritious and safe foods.

Addressing some of the more immediate causes of malnutrition is essential to reducing the vulnerability of migrants, which may not have a strong social network to rely on for support. Linking those who are

nutritionally or socially vulnerable, including migrant households, with appropriate services increases the chances of positive nutrition and employment outcomes. LIFT partners will provide support through worker centres, peer counsellors/support, and social and behaviour change communication approaches to support long lasting shifts in how communities approach nutrition and WASH practices. Systems-level waste management and water access initiatives are implemented in conjunction with Yangon City Development Committee. These initiatives can be scaled up if proven viable and successful.

Multiple pathways exist to enable women and their families to make positive choices around food intake and nutritional practices, particularly in the First 1,000 Days. Supporting women's empowerment through improving their access to information on labour and sexual and reproductive rights, addressing the lack of employment opportunities and low income, advocating for maternity rights and promoting decent and safe working conditions are all essential actions to build resilient and well-nourished communities in Yangon's peri-urban context.

Nutrition and Resilience: Evaluation and Learning Questions (ELQ)

Improved nutrition can be both an input and an outcome of strengthened resilience. Good nutrition security can prepare a population for the impacts of short-term shocks or long-term stresses. Likewise, strengthened resilience can lead to community-wide improvements in nutritional status. That said the relationship between nutrition and resilience is not a clear linear causal relationship. Understanding the linkages and investing in joint nutrition and resilience-focused programmes is essential to maximising impact and investments: the cost of poor nutrition is high; for every 10 per cent increase in income per capita, stunting is estimated to decrease by 3.2 per cent and wasting by 7.4 per cent.¹⁶

Robust evidence from different countries around the world demonstrate that nutrition and food security during the early years have long-term effects on productivity¹⁷ and the ability to adapt to new environments and respond to shock/stresses.¹⁸ Despite this knowledge, malnutrition and food insecurity remain major issues for many developing countries, including Myanmar. Both malnutrition and food insecurity are major barriers to Myanmar's economic growth and labour productivity and have contributed to the country's vulnerability to climate change.

¹⁶ Development Initiatives (2017). Global Nutrition Report 2017: Nourishing the SDGs, South Eastern countries report. Bristol, UK: Development Initiatives.

¹⁷ Sahn, David E., and Harold Alderman (1988). The Effects of Human Capital on Wages, and the Determinants of Labor Supply in a Developing Country. *Journal of Development Economics* 29 (2): 157–83. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0304-3878\(88\)90033-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/0304-3878(88)90033-8)

¹⁸ Bartlett, S. (2008). Climate change and urban children: impacts and implications for adaptation in low- and middle-income countries. *Environment and Urbanization*, 20(2), 501–519. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956247808096125>

To understand resilience in the Myanmar context, one of LIFT's evaluation and learning questions explores the extent to which LIFT has contributed to strengthening the resilience of poor people in Myanmar. LIFT, with support from the LEARN project, examined the relationship between resilience and nutrition by undertaking further analysis of LIFT Household Survey data and developed two papers: *Nutrition and Resilience in Myanmar: Improving the Nutritional Status of Women and Children in LIFT-supported Villages (2014-2018)*. Part 1, explores the nutrition and resilience context in Myanmar and proposes a hypothesis of how they are linked. Part 2, includes an analysis of LIFT 2015 and 2017 Household Survey and project data through a nutrition-resilience lens. This is complemented with qualitative data gathered from individuals in target communities and from LIFT implementing partners. The papers analyse nutrition and resilience at multiple levels, including community, household, and individual levels.

Relevant findings to support the relationship between nutrition and resilience in LIFT-intervention areas include:

Community level. The papers highlight four main causes of vulnerability of the population in Myanmar. These causes, which can weaken communities' resilience and nutritional status, are: (1) climate risks and weak disaster management planning, (2) ongoing conflicts and social unrest, (3) underinvestment and underdevelopment across different states and regions in Myanmar, and (4) rapid urbanisation. The three top shocks experienced in LIFT-supported villages in 2017 were widespread crop failure, market price crashes for crops, and price spikes for essential food items. Widespread death of livestock and flooding were also reported across the villages. The Delta, Uplands and Rakhine State experienced the most widespread crop failures, while the Dry Zone experienced the most frequent market price crashes. Shocks experienced by communities affect wasting and, to a lesser extent, stunting. Moderate and severe wasting rates were higher in villages that experienced storms or cyclones, and the wasting rates increased as the exposure and severity of the shock increased. In response to shocks experienced by LIFT households, coping strategies varied. For instance, when exposed to drought, households sold livestock and valued assets, spent their savings, took loans, and sought help from family and friends. When coping with flooding, similar coping strategies were used. These strategies demonstrated absorptive and adaptive capacities among the LIFT communities.

Household level. The papers also examined changes observed at the household level between 2015 and 2017 delivering insights into resilience as it relates to nutrition. Changes observed at the household level—a number of which are positive—include that in 2017 households were more educated and

less poor than in 2015. In terms of food security, households experienced the same seasonal food shortages in 2015 and 2017 but were more food secure, except in Rakhine State. They had greater household dietary diversity. Households also had increased access to improved water sources and sanitation facilities. Overall, the use of unimproved sources of water declined, the use of tube wells and boreholes increased, and households had better access to toilet facilities. Households were receiving more WASH interventions, mainly from non-LIFT partners. By 2017, households were receiving more support from government through LIFT-funded maternal and child cash transfer activities.

Individual level. At the individual level, the 2017 survey data suggests that the nutritional status of children aged under five years in LIFT programme areas remains a major barrier to resilience. Though stunting rates did not decrease overall, exposure to nutrition and WASH interventions appears to have had a positive impact on stunting. Based on the panel data collected from households living in the same villages in 2015 and 2017, there is a lower proportion of stunted children in households receiving nutrition or WASH interventions compared to households not receiving interventions. The stunting results were relatively static over time, except in the Upland areas. The considerable increase in stunting observed in the Uplands is most likely due to the fact that the LIFT Uplands Programme further expanded its projects to cover difficult-to-reach populations in Chin State, which has the highest prevalence rate of stunting in the country. Individuals in LIFT intervention areas also saw positive changes on some of the determinants of malnutrition, including exclusive breastfeeding, minimum acceptable diet for children aged under two, and dietary diversity among women. Though there is still significant room for progress, these achievements are demonstrative of successful changes in practices.

Overall, the poor nutritional situation among women and children in Myanmar is demonstrative of insufficient resilience capacity at all levels. A better understanding of the interconnected pathways and drivers of malnutrition should be met with integrated programmes that address them. Investing in joint nutrition resilience programmes and adaptive monitoring systems are crucial steps to promoting absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities among vulnerable populations in Myanmar.

Looking ahead

The relationship between nutrition, resilience, protection, food security, indebtedness is not linear. Integrated programmes build a better understanding of the causes of malnutrition and respond to the multiple pathways that lead to poor nutrition outcomes. Integrated programmes can also aim to improve nutrition status as a strategy to reducing the risk factors that lead to vulnerability.

LIFT will continue to work towards this goal, while finalising programmes in the South-East, Chin and Kachin/northern Shan States.

Continued investment in Chin State

Moving forward, LIFT will continue to support the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) to achieve universal coverage of both cash and social and behaviour change communications (SBCC) components of the maternal and child cash transfer (MCCT) programme in Chin State. This will be done by applying local and global evidence to improve programme quality, and by filling necessary resource and technical gaps, where possible. In 2020, LIFT's package of support to DSW will further strengthen the capacity of DSW to monitor and effectively evaluate MCCT coverage. LIFT will develop a feasible and secure community feedback mechanism that gives communities a direct communication channel with the government to provide feedback and raise MCCT programme-related concerns. Alongside the community feedback mechanism, LIFT will equip DSW to effectively market MCCT programme information and key messages to beneficiaries, communities, leaders, and other government departments as part of a comprehensive behaviour change communications package.

LIFT will also continue to work with Access to Health to engage the State Health Department and National Nutrition Centre to strengthen the role of basic health staff and volunteers in providing health and nutrition support and services to MCCT beneficiary communities. Both LIFT and Access to Health will collaborate to ensure that the State Health Department and the Chin DSW have sufficient resources to implement the Chin SBCC Action Plan for the MCCT, and to align with the forthcoming national SBCC strategy (SBCC-NPAN).

In addition to direct support to the government, LIFT will continue to work with a group of implementing partners selected under the Chin call for proposals in 2019, especially supporting nutrition-sensitive value chain and agriculture interventions. Chin is unique among states within Myanmar due to its low population density that is dispersed across a mountainous landscape with limited infrastructure development that contributes to a sense of isolation. These attributes have contributed to a lack of agricultural development and market integration along with significant out-migration with limited opportunities to diversify livelihoods. Consequently, there is a need for a nuanced approach to addressing the challenges facing rural communities in Chin where poor nutritional outcomes at the household level is a significant constraint to economic growth with long-term implications.

The core outcome of the new Chin Programme framework is to Improve nutrition and livelihood outcomes at the household and community level.

While pathways to achieving this outcome are diverse, the programme views the following components as being relevant in context to Chin:

- » Increasing incomes at the household level
- » Increased market access and integration
- » Improved access and availability of nutritious food
- » Women's empowerment
- » Improved nutrition and care practices

The target audience in any intervention are households with breastfeeding women and children under two years; households with children under two years, single women-headed households, people with disabilities, families with few resources, and farming households that are at a commercial and semi-commercial level of production that can begin to engage in local and distant markets.

An innovative element in the programme is the explicit role of research to understand the importance of homestead-based food production systems in addressing household food and nutrition security. This includes understanding the drivers that support these systems, their impacts both through the supply of nutritious food at the household level and income generation. Understanding the contextual applicability of interventions and the role they play in ensuring food and nutritional security will have significant implications for further programming and targeting.

Expanding to the South-East

LIFT's South-East Programme will further support DSW to achieve universal coverage of the MCCT in both government-controlled and non-government areas of Kayin and Kayah. Following the call for proposals in late 2019, LIFT and DSW will work with selected implementing partners to co-design appropriate systems-strengthening interventions that will reach the most vulnerable populations in conflict-affected areas. The forthcoming LIFT programmes in Kayah and Kayin are expected to include providing support to the MCCT rollout, introducing innovative and appropriate approaches to SBCC that can be tested at scale and integrated into future government-led MCCT programming, strengthening coordination between the government and ethnic health organisations and introducing mechanisms that enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of the MCCT. WASH interventions that improve hygiene and sanitation practices will be a core part of the programme's approach to addressing undernutrition. At the same time, innovative and effective approaches to improving access to water through partnerships with the private sector will also be explored and encouraged by LIFT. To support sub-national implementation of the MS-NPAN, programmes in Kayin and Kayah States will also include initiatives to support state- and township-level implementation of the plan.

The Social and Behaviour Change Communication - National Plan of Action for Nutrition (SBCC-NPAN) Strategy

LIFT and the Access to Health Fund are working with UNICEF to support the development of the SBCC National Plan of Action for Nutrition (SBCC-NPAN) Strategy. Owned by the Ministry of Health and Sports, this strategy will complement the MS-NPAN. The objectives of the SBCC-NPAN are to 1) provide an evidence-based framework to guide all behaviour change activities relating to maternal, infant and young child nutrition (MIYCN); 2) harmonise partners' communications work, targeting the same audience segments with same messages under a unified brand, led by MoHS; and 3) complement and support implementation of MS-NPAN interventions, including the MCCT.

Through this collaboration, LIFT's and Access to Health's implementing partners will gain access to a series of pre-tested, government-approved SBC materials. This unified approach will facilitate systematic and widespread behaviour change. The strategy will be accompanied by a toolbox with guidance for replication across the different states and regions of Myanmar. The SBCC-NPAN will provide an evidence-based framework to guide behaviour change activities relating to nutrition. While stakeholder consultation and consensus will determine the key behaviours related to nutrition that will be prioritised under this strategy, these will relate to the First 1,000 Days. Maternal, infant and young child feeding, including related/relevant early childhood development practices such as early stimulation, play, responsive feeding, hygiene and sanitation will likely be included in the strategy.

MS-NPAN- moving from inception to implementation phase

LIFT is committed to supporting the development and implementation of the government's ambitious MS-NPAN and will continue to support the multi-sectoral plan for nutrition in 2020. Support for the core team, which led the inception phase, will continue until June 2020 and possibly beyond. LIFT's nutrition programmes in Chin, Kachin, northern Shan, Kayah and Kayah will play important roles in contributing to the success of the MS-NPAN. LIFT, along with Access to Health and other supporting agencies are working with the MoHS, MoALI and MSWRR to clarify the support needs for the implementation phase of the MS-NPAN. The key priority for the next phase will be the allocation of budgets to the prioritised interventions, which have been agreed as part of the sub-national planning process. LIFT engages with parliamentarians in Nay Pyi Taw and in Kayah and looks forward to facilitating the active engagement by sub-national leadership and advocating for appropriate allocation of budget and resources for positive nutrition outcomes.

3.2 FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

LIFT's Financial Inclusion Programme works with the private sector on:

- » Microfinance capital market development
- » Agribusiness Finance Programme (AFP) delivering hire purchase loan products to rural entrepreneurs for agricultural equipment; un- and under-secured loan products for actors in value chains and digital savings mechanisms for rural people
- » Beans and pulses seed sector development

LIFT's USD 51.5 million investment in these programmes to date has leveraged around USD 544 million from the private sector partners – a leverage of greater than 10 times.

LIFT's investments and their leveraging have a catalytic effect. For example:

- » LIFT's AFP hire purchase programme for agricultural equipment has been replicated by the Government's Myanmar Agriculture Development Bank (MADB) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) that provides loan capital to Myanmar Economic Bank (MEB). Total financing to date is USD 69 million. Several other banks (Myanmar Citizen's Bank, Cooperative Bank, and AYA Bank) have hire purchase for agricultural equipment but on a small scale.
- » LIFT's MFI Capital Market Programme directly influenced Yoma Bank to engage in providing under-secured loans to MFIs, USD 72 million to date. Other banks (AYA, Ayeyarwady Bank, Myanmar Apex Bank and Cooperative Bank) have followed with smaller portfolios.

Microfinance

At December 2019, LIFT has 28 financial inclusion partners (nine local MFIs, 15 international MFIs, two joint venture MFI companies, two credit cooperatives) that reached 3,816,936 clients (90 per cent are women) from seven regions and seven states. LIFT's financial services client numbers increased because of leveraging that resulted from LIFT's debt financing programme through the TCX hedging facility Phase II and Yoma Bank's wholesale loans to 11 MFIs. The performance of LIFT's microfinance partners is detailed in Annex 5. All LIFT MFIs, except Pact Global Microfinance Fund (PGMF), have microfinance license as for-profit companies under the *Myanmar Company Law* and *The Microfinance Business Law*. Key 2019 microfinance results include:

- » 2.73 million clients
- » USD 615 million total assets
- » USD 1,068 million in loans disbursed
- » USD 522 million in loans outstanding
- » USD 117.1 million in savings mobilised

The ratio of loans outstanding to total assets is a healthy 0.851, indicating that MFI capital is being used efficiently. Almost 58 per cent was used for livestock and small businesses, 27 per cent for agriculture, 14 per cent for small and medium enterprise loans and 1 per cent for social loans.

All, but one, of the LIFT-supported MFIs are operationally self-sufficient (OSS), meaning they cover all their operational costs. The exception is the Sun Institute, which is 63 per cent operationally self-sufficient. Due to the Financial Regulatory Department's directive on Cease and Desist of Credit Operations to the Sun Institute, SUN's operations were suspended in mid-March 2018, and re-started in June 2019; the effects to loan repayment and financial sustainability were significant; PAR grew to more than 0.5, and Sun Institute is no longer financially self-sufficient.

All the international MFIs have achieved financial self-sufficiency (FSS), meaning they cover their operational and financial costs.

Microfinance Capital Markets Programme

LIFT is the market-maker in the development of Myanmar's MFI capital market. This was accomplished by establishing a swap market to hedge foreign exchange risk in partnership with The Currency Exchange (TCX). Two phases of currency exchange hedging have occurred with LIFT funding. In 2017/18 the first phase secured USD 86.2 million in private sector co-financing comprised of 40 loans issued by 11 lenders to 12 MFIs.

The project was to be transitional over two years, based on the assumption that MFIs would progressively find more alternatives to build their

Table 3.2: LIFT's investment and subsequent leveraging from the private sector

| Programme and private sector partners | LIFT investment (USD million) | Leveraged amount (USD million) | Remark |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| MFI Capital Markets | 10.05 | 86.2 | phase I |
| The Currency Exchange Fund (TCX) | 6.75 | 198 | phase II – subscribed in 2019 |
| Yoma Bank Agribusiness Finance Programme | 18.7 | 137 | mechanisation hire purchase |
| | | 30 | credit limit for un- and under-secured agribusiness loans |
| | | 72 | credit limit for un- and under-secured MFI loans |
| | | 119 | Total disbursed un- and under-secured loans |
| Myanmar Allied Farmers Seed Company (MAFSCO) AWBA | 6.7 | 4 | |

capital structure without LIFT's catalytic investment, and most importantly, that the Myanmar interest rate structure would become market driven.

Unfortunately, the government's announcement that the financial sector's interest rate structure would remain unchanged through 2019 made it imperative to mobilise a second round of investments. In the second phase in 2019, LIFT's investment of USD 12 million is projected to deliver an estimated USD 198 million in private sector co-financing to MFIs. A significant change in phase II was that investments in MFIs were explicitly linked to reaching a targeted number of vulnerable people: the poor as defined by the Poverty Probability Index (PPI), households with people with disabilities, internally displaced people, migrants, landless and households with children in secondary school (addressing child labour). In

addition, loans to smallholder farmers were allowed. This change is in line with LIFT's focus in 2019-2023 on increasing its reach to vulnerable people.

The selection criteria for investors were also modified. The credit margin was lowered from 6.5 per cent + LIBOR 6 months to 5 per cent plus LIBOR 6 months.¹⁹ The minimum tenor was increased to 3 years.²⁰

Proposals arising from TCX phase II were appraised and submitted to LIFT's Fund Board in 2019. Both the demand from MFIs, and the supply of foreign direct investment (FDI) from investors was high. Sixteen MFIs were approved by the Fund Board and 28 investors submitted term sheets detailing terms and conditions of the loans to 14 MFIs.

¹⁹ LIBOR is the London Inter-Bank Offered Rate. It is used as a reference for setting the interest rate on other loans.

²⁰ LIFT requested TCX to increase the credit margin to 7.0 per cent plus LIBOR 6 months to incentivise and de-risk investors to engage. LIFT is waiting to see if the investment community responds.

The demand notional limit for MFI borrowing was USD 198 million. The supply of FDI was USD 271.6 million. Four of the 16 MFIs were not offered term sheets by investors. One MFI, BRAC, decided to not participate.

The leverage is 27 times LIFT's investment against the projected 10 times at the time of the call for proposals.²¹ The projected swap cost, funded by LIFT, is now USD 6.5 million. Given the different timeline for loans to each MFI, this is only an estimate at December 2019. Without LIFT's MFI Capital Market Programme there would be little to no borrowing from international investors because no investor would lend at an annualised percentage rate (APR) of 16 per cent without hedging the currency.

Impact of government policy on the MFI capital markets in 2019

There were two major Government directives issued in the first six months of 2019:

- » The Central Bank of Myanmar issued directive 1/2019 on 15 January 2019 stating that the lending rate for un- and under-secured lending could not exceed 16 per cent per annum. The lending rate is inclusive of all other fees associated with the loan. The 16 per cent lending interest is, therefore, equivalent to a 16 per cent annualised percentage rate (APR).
- » The Financial Regulatory Department of the Ministry of Planning and Finance and Industry issued Directive 1/2019 on 5 June 2019 stating that the lending interest rate for microfinance loans could not exceed 28 per cent per annum. Further, FRD restricted all additional costs associated with the loan to a maximum of 200 basis points. The maximum microfinance loan APR cannot exceed 30 per cent.

These two directives impacted on the MFI Capital Market Programme. LIFT's fundamental position is that LIFT will not subsidise below the government-established interest rate structure and distort the market. The increase in pricing for foreign direct investment (FDI) from 13 per cent (the previous government interest rate for un- and under-secured lending) to 16 per cent reduced LIFT's subsidy substantially.

The impact on MFIs is significant. Per loan, the net profit will be slightly negative for some MFIs and slightly positive for other MFIs (+/- 100 basis points). There was significant push-back from nearly all MFIs to subsidise further because the marginal returns were low to negative. LIFT simulated a number of MFI financial statements with the additional FDI/debt financing. It was clear that the MFIs return on assets remained above the LIFT normative benchmark of 5

per cent. LIFT presented its analysis to MFIs and all MFIs concluded that despite the low and sometimes negative marginal returns, it was good business to engage.

Policy engagement

In 2019, LIFT was significantly involved in curbing the MFI lending interest change. The Financial Regulatory Department (FRD)'s proposal was originally a 13.3 per cent decline in the lending interest rate—from 30 per cent per annum on the outstanding balance to 26 per cent on the outstanding balance. The additional 2 per cent in non-interest income cap on loans was within what MFIs were charging, which ranged from 0 to 2.5 per cent. The net effect was to reduce annualised percentage rates (APR)²² from approximately 32 per cent to 30 per cent. LIFT drafted its position that a 30 per cent APR would not negatively impact MFIs, but a 28 per cent APR would curb expansion. FRD accepted LIFT's position to lower lending interest rates to 28 per cent with a 30 per cent APR.

LIFT supports the Financial Regulatory Department (FRD) of the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry (MoPFI) to enhance the capacity of regulators to supervise MFIs, on-site and off-site. LIFT funds two staff who work with FRD in their offices to build the capacity of the team to clean data and produce reports on off-site examination. In 2019, two five-day trainings on basics of accounting were conducted with 36 participants, (83 per cent women) and seven five-day trainings on off-site examination were conducted with 129 participants, (88 per cent women). LIFT also drafted on-site examination and due diligence modules for deposit-taking MFIs.

In 2019, LIFT worked closely with the FRD and Myanmar Microfinance Association (MMFA) in reviewing the new *Microfinance Law* that was submitted to lower house of the Parliament in December 2019.

Agribusiness Finance Programme (AFP)

Access to finance is a key factor driving increased mechanisation in Myanmar. Policy and regulatory constraints that limit the flow of capital to the agriculture sector have a significant impact on farmer adoption of mechanisation. The enactment of the *Financial Institutions Law* in 2016 affirmed the Government of Myanmar's commitment to modernising Myanmar's finance sector. The Government also has a stated policy objective of developing the agricultural sector. Despite these Government commitments, commercial lending by banks, microfinance institutions and other non-bank financial institutions continues to lag behind the demand for capital in the sector. Agriculture contributes 26.3 per cent to Myanmar's gross domestic product and accounts for 50 per cent of

²¹ The leverage is not determined by LIFT, but by market conditions, credit margin, risk and tenor.

²² The APR is a broader measure of the cost of a loan because it includes the interest plus all other costs associated with the loan.

employment, but lending to the sector comprises only 2.5 per cent of overall lending in the country. Only 22 per cent of smallholder farmers have access to formal finance.

Agricultural equipment hire purchase

In 2016, LIFT contracted Yoma Bank to implement the Agribusiness Finance Programme (AFP) to provide hire purchase loans to smallholder farmers for purchasing agriculture machinery. The programme was ongoing in 2019. LIFT provided a USD 9 million partial risk guarantee designed to reduce Yoma Bank's exposure to potential loan defaults. The partial risk guarantee facilitated hire purchase loans to small- and medium-sized agribusinesses on terms that reduced down payment size from 30 per cent to 10 per cent of the machinery's value and increased the repayment period for lease agreements from one to three years. LIFT's investment provided small- and medium-sized agribusinesses with access to a reliable and sustainable financial institution, an alternative to informal loans with less attractive terms and sudden demands for immediate full loan repayments. The programme also provides equipment dealers with ready liquidity.

The AFP has achieved great success in extending agricultural financing to small- and medium-sized agribusinesses in Myanmar. As of December 2019, USD 137 million in hire purchase loans were issued and used to purchase agricultural equipment valued at USD 161 million. The financing reached 7,735 agribusinesses that purchased 4,850 four-wheel tractors, 1,024 combine harvesters, 160 harvesters, 395 two-wheel tractors and 1,306 agriculture transport vehicles. It is estimated that the programme has reached around 240,000 rural families, either directly through financing or by access to the resulting machinery rental service businesses. The AFP has strongly outperformed targets. At the start of the programme in 2016 the target was for USD 30 million of agricultural machinery to be financed.

Key indicators of the AFP's impact on Myanmar's agriculture sector are:

- » It is estimated that one four-wheel tractor works on around 800 acres, which translates into 288,475 farmers who now have access to tractors for land preparation.
- » Use of tractors instead of draught animals for land preparation reduces costs per acre by USD 5, delivering a 3 per cent increase in gross margin per acre.

- » Changes in yield due to improved land preparation have led to an increase in gross margins of 39 per cent in maize production and 21 per cent in groundnut and sesame production. Factoring in cost savings of USD 5 per acre, the average gross margin, conservatively, increased by USD 30. The impact on farmers' income is estimated at USD 116 million.

Michigan State University (MSU)'s research in the Dry Zone reveals that agribusiness service providers are scale neutral—access to agricultural equipment services is the same for all farmers regardless of land size, indicating that smallholder farmers are benefitting from mechanisation, although they may not be purchasers themselves.

Mechanisation contributes to climate smart agriculture as improved quality of land preparation and deeper tillage, allows root systems to grow deeper, and plants to become more drought tolerant, leading to higher yields and incomes.²³ The reduction of an estimated 10 per cent of draught animals²⁴ in Myanmar over the past decade has contributed to a significant reduction in greenhouse gases (methane).

AFP and Yoma Bank's un- and under-secured lending

LIFT's USD 12.5 million investment (USD 9 million hire purchase, USD 3.5 million un-under secured loans) leveraged around USD 256 million of Yoma Bank's own investment into agriculture, not just for machinery hire purchase, but also for a variety of financial products and services. The credit limit for un- and under-secured lending was USD 102 million at December 2019.

In 2017, Yoma Bank's Agribusiness Finance Programme introduced four new lending products: discounted accounts receivable financing, payable financing, seasonal overdrafts, and back-to-back, semi-secured, three-year lending to microfinance institutions. All these financing products were new to the Myanmar market and designed to increase supply of un(der)secured loans to agribusinesses in Myanmar. The loan products were needed as the usual practice among Myanmar banks of requiring land and buildings to be provided as collateral had resulted in low supply and demand for financial services by agribusinesses.

By the end of December 2019, AFP had disbursed USD 119 million in unsecured lending. The programme estimates that more than 379,000 rural families were reached by this financing through 69 Yoma Bank branches.

²³ The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) defines climate smart agriculture as "agriculture that sustainably increases productivity, enhances resilience (adaptation), reduces/removes greenhouse gases (mitigation) where possible, and enhances achievement of national food security and development goals."

²⁴ Estimation made by FAO

Discounted accounts receivable financing:

This product provides a cash injection at the top of the value chain enabling input dealers to sell to more farmers on credit. As a result, the supply of agricultural inputs increases in the market. Yoma Bank provides working capital to input suppliers based on the amount they sell to a dealer on credit. By the end of December 2019, MMK 22 billion (USD 15 million) was disbursed, benefitting around 35,000 farmers.

Dealer payable financing: This product is structured so that the dealers in the middle of the value chain, rather than the suppliers at the top, are the bank's customers. Dealers apply for loans from Yoma Bank to fund their purchase of inputs from suppliers. Yoma Bank pays the suppliers directly and the suppliers accept 50 per cent of the risk of dealers defaulting on the loans. By the end of December 2019, MMK 16 billion (USD 11 million) was disbursed, estimated to benefit more than 35,000 farmers.

Seasonal Overdraft Financing: This product is provided by Yoma Bank to small-and medium-sized maize traders to increase their capacity to trade and stimulate market expansion. In 2019, AFP expanded their financial services to paddy/rice traders. Traders draw from Yoma Bank at harvest time in November and repay the full amount in July. Finance is provided based on 75 per cent of the previous year's peak season sales volume. By the end of December 2019, MMK 36 billion (USD 25 million) was disbursed, benefitting an estimated 37,200 maize and paddy farmers who deal with the 74 maize traders and 111 paddy traders who received these loans.

MFI lending: This back-to-back, semi-secured funding product allows overseas funding to be hedged and results in more micro-loans to farmers. AFP built up the product, including the design and introduction of credit policy, legal documentation, MFI scorecard, process flows, credit application format, standard for financial due diligence, and model for operating due diligence. By the end of December 2019, MMK 97 billion (USD 68 million) was disbursed to 12 MFIs, estimated to benefit more than 270,200 rural families.

Individual Development Account (IDA) Programme

Yoma Bank started implementing a digital financial services IDA component of the Agribusiness Finance Programme in September 2017 to stimulate savings behaviour in rural Myanmar. This financial service was co-financed with Yoma Bank's significant investments

in WAVE Money and other digital services. This is another example of the leverage of LIFT's investment - Yoma Bank's entry to the rural markets with LIFT's support resulted in the bank developing products they identified there was unmet demand for in rural communities. Benefits flow to LIFT's rural beneficiaries.

The IDA component targets savings to rural households and provides IDA clients access to Yoma Bank's suite of borrowing and saving services and the ability to transact through their smartphone using Yoma Bank's SMART App.²⁵ New clients are provided with a compensating balance/incentive payment for increasing their savings, which can be spent or used as cash collateral to borrow. These funds are not able to be withdrawn for one year. The more money clients contribute in savings the more they can subsequently borrow. The nature of these evolving debit and credit balances is to support people in their daily cash management and ensure they have money available in case of an emergency. As well as saving, clients can choose to borrow smaller amounts than offered in the standard SMART money product and can access support for digital and financial literacy through a number of partner organisations including L-ift²⁶, Opportunity Now²⁷ and WAVE money²⁸ agents. Additionally, these partners function as channels to communicate feedback from rural people about what works and what does not regarding the products on offer. The services already provided by these partners in the normal course of their business, such as farm advisory services and financial literacy training, are provided concurrently to new clients, making for a strong partnership with Yoma Bank's access to finance proposition.

Achievements to date include scaling up the WAVE network (54,000 agents), launching the SMART App (288,000 users and growing), developing data analytics to responsibly service new digital clients, engaging partners for IDA rollout, onboarding digital coaching partners and hiring the requisite people in Yoma Bank's digital department.

In the second half of 2019, the IDA conducted two pilot programmes: maternal and child cash transfers (MCCT) and the Double Deposit Programme in the Dry Zone. The MCCT pilot was conducted in partnership with L-ift. The pilot focussed on signing up individuals to SMART accounts who had pre-qualified for MCCT. L-ift visited 21 villages, reaching 803 clients and on-boarded 419 customers. The SMART App was activated by 251 clients. MCCT piloting was successful in capturing essential learnings about how

²⁵ SMART App is a mobile smartphone App that allows users to utilise the bank's full suite of digital services.

²⁶ A social enterprise specialised in low income financial transformation with strong rural reach

²⁷ An entrepreneurship development organisation

²⁸ A joint venture between telecommunications company Telenor and Yoma Bank providing mobile financial services via a national network of agents.

eligible pregnant and breastfeeding mothers can be reached and the difficulties they face signing up for digital cash delivery.

The Double Deposit Programme was piloted for four weeks in the Magway and Sagaing Regions where there was a high number of existing Yoma customers (4,905) living in villages with a bank balance of MMK 50,000 (USD 33) or less over the past six months.

The main challenges identified were the cash-in cash-out options that enable people to move banknotes in and out of their e-wallet, and that to become a Yoma Bank client you had to travel to a branch for on-boarding.

IDA's cash-in cash-out

One of the main challenges for Yoma Bank's digital strategy in general and IDA in particular is how to facilitate cash-in cash-out. Rural people living far away from banks and ATMs, need to be able to convert their cash into a digital savings balance on their phone (and vice versa) when they need to, without significant logistics, time or costs. Myanmar remains heavily dependent on cash with a limited banking network yet very high smartphone penetration. Solving the cash-in cash-out challenge is key to reaching the millions of unbanked.

Key to the solution has been the WAVE network, which had 54,000 agents at December 2019. It is now possible to transfer digital money from a WAVE wallet to the SMART app, yet this still requires a client to visit a branch. Customers found it cumbersome to have to use two Apps and this was a deterrent to attracting new customers. In 2020, it is planned that Yoma Bank clients will be able to use the WAVE network to process cash-in and cash-out, without having to use the WAVE app as a go-between—clients can transact either through their WAVE or SMART application. This broadens Yoma Bank's 80-branch network to 54,000 WAVE agents across Myanmar. Transaction fees are in range of 1.2 per cent per cash-in cash-out transaction. The WAVE network remains a key pillar of Yoma Bank's strategy to reduce dependency on the branch network and further drive financial inclusion.

IDA's remote and assisted on-boarding

Currently, the Central Bank of Myanmar's regulations stipulate face-to-face contact and ID verification with a national registration card before a customer can officially be on-boarded. This process of verifying that somebody is who they say they are is known as Know Your Customer (KYC). Currently, Yoma Bank's SMART App allows clients to provide all of the required information online, except for the KYC process, which still has to be performed at the branch. As a solution, Yoma Bank has proposed and received approval

from the Central Bank of Myanmar for assisted on-boarding through WAVE agents and third-party partners. Partnering with L-ift is the approach that Yoma Bank is now relying on for KYC.

In July 2019, a pilot of the IDA was implemented using the same model planned for maternal and child cash transfers (MCCT) clients in the Dry Zone. L-ift assisted with on-boarding clients, and Opportunity Now provided digital coaching. In August 2019, L-ift and Opportunity Now were on-boarding MCCT clients. A new platform—Apply Smart—that allows for instant account opening and activation of Yoma Bank's mobile banking application was launched in southern Shan State and to MCCT beneficiaries.

IDA and digital credit

Encouraging people to save money through a digital savings solution is not a standalone product but will be part of a digital banking platform that allows clients to manage their daily and weekly liquidity needs. Part of this solution is the ability to borrow short-term credit when the need arises, at rates much lower than what has traditionally been on offer. Often, they have no choice but to borrow from friends and family or to turn to the local moneylenders.

IDA/SMART customers can apply through their App for a short term, fully unsecured loan—SMART Credit. If they repay this loan on time, their credit rating with Yoma Bank improves and they become eligible for incrementally larger loan limits in the future. The loan size ranges from MMK 15,000 to MMK 5 million (USD 10 – USD 3,300) and increases as a function of average savings balance in the customer's account and prior on-time repayments. SMART Credit was piloted in July 2018 and disbursed over 9,423 loans to nearly 6,070 Yoma Bank clients by June 2019.²⁹ Central Bank approval was received in early January 2019, allowing Yoma Bank to offer this product to more than 175,000 SMART account holders.

In addition to SMART Credit, which is designed to help clients manage their daily liquidity needs, Yoma Bank also introduced SMART Credit Business, which is tailored to smaller enterprises. Loan sizes range from MMK 100,000 to MMK 10 million (USD 65 – USD 6,550). The product was initially introduced as a working capital loan for WAVE Money agents, who typically run small shops and as such qualify as business owners. By the end of June 2019, MMK 22,564.53 million (USD 15 million) had been disbursed to a total of 6,926 clients.

²⁹ These loans are not part of the AFP but are evidence of the progress being made towards offering financial products that meet the needs of LIFT's target beneficiaries.

IDA's pilot programmes learnings

A few learnings are common to both MCCT and Double Deposit Programme pilots:

- » On-boarding the unbanked and underbanked is requiring significant head office and branch staff operational resources to execute. The implications for Yoma Bank for future work is to more actively rely on partners who are experienced working in the field, which will help to address some of the burden of on-boarding customers.
- » Access to a physical bank branch varies and the on-boarding process can be challenging for people who live far from a branch. Field staff have had to rely on taking customers information on paper and creating accounts at branch at a later time.
- » The tablets used for on-boarding sometimes face issues with stability, making it challenging to administer the Poverty Probability Index and on-board customers digitally.
- » Communication with rural clients by phone and SMS messaging is hindered by customers changing their phone numbers and not updating details with the bank.
- » Those in rural populations often only have one phone for a number of family members. This makes on-boarding difficult if the customer does not bring the phone with them and SMS messages do not reach the intended person.
- » Various other technical and user issues related to mobile phone:
 - The type of phone individuals have is too simple to support the SMART App.
 - Phone data storage is full so the application cannot be downloaded.
 - SMS inbox is full, so confirmation and other important messages are not received.
 - Unreliable phone batteries lead to the phone shutting down during the App installation process.

A few additional learnings specific to the MCCT pilot were:

- » Clients need significant assistance to upload and work with the SMART App. In most cases follow up was needed to make sure the clients were able to use the App. The door-to-door approach, although slower, had a better market penetration and the team was better able to identify the correct clients and solve issues with using the App.
- » Client also needed support after initial application setup because they accidentally, and at times intentionally (e.g. to make room for other apps), deleted the App or the phone became damaged and they needed to reload the App.

- » For group meetings, although many people attended, the people who were eligible for the programme did not always attend or they did not bring the right paperwork and could not be contacted later on.
- » While L-ift is the third-party executing the work on the ground, they still need ongoing and notable levels of support from Yoma Bank staff to troubleshoot various issues.
- » Some MCCT beneficiaries were difficult to locate because of incorrect phone numbers, requiring door-to-door visits.
- » Some customers were not eligible because they did not have the correct identification documents.

A few additional learnings specific to the Double Deposit Programme pilot were:

- » Level of deposit required for customers is too high, especially at certain times of the year/month.
- » Difficulty traveling to a bank branch to deposit money prevents some from continuing with the scheme – there was a 10 per cent drop-out rate among those who created an account.
- » The programme is sometimes perceived as “too good to be true” because Yoma Bank is offering to match deposits.
- » Some locations that attracted many potential customers became challenging operationally to manage and it was difficult to anticipate ahead of time how big the crowd would be.

Performance of Yoma Bank's AFP portfolio

In the first year of the AFP, the portfolio at risk (PAR) was low and Yoma Bank did not draw on the partial risk guarantee provided by LIFT. This was the case as loan repayments were not yet due. As the hire purchase loans matured the PAR increased.

By December 2019:

- » USD 1.4 million (MMK 2 billion MMK) was written off from the AFP Hire Purchase Special Reserve account (or 16 per cent of the total partial risk guarantee fund)
- » The portfolio at risk (PAR) was 16 per cent (USD 6.6 million)
- » Non-performing loans were 3 per cent (USD 1.4 million, or 21 per cent of the PAR)
- » The number of delinquent accounts was 602 (16.3 per cent of outstanding borrowers)

Obviously, there is significant risk in the AFP's hire purchase portfolio. Based on the evidence, LIFT's estimate for a 20 per cent first loss is fairly accurate when factoring in the absence of a major climatic event since the AFP became operational. There is significant underlying risk because of loans based on referrals from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI)'s Agriculture Mechanization Department. This high-risk decision to support this

government programme was made due to changes in MoALI's budget that largely eliminated their procurement of agriculture equipment.

There is little doubt that the current PAR in the AFP portfolio will continue to claim the AFP HP Special Reserve Fund.

Gender impact

Yoma Bank designed their AFP activities to be gender neutral. Investigation of women's participation shows that while few women became borrowers, women did play a role in influencing borrowing decisions through their positions as managers of household finances, as well as through control of land titles required for collateralisation.

An independent evaluation of the AFP was conducted in 2019. The report highlighted that the hire purchase programme for agricultural machinery reduced family labour time, including women, by 26 per cent.

Further need for financial services

There remains need in the market for more financial services.

Dealers interviewed by Michigan State University (MSU) say they lack adequate working capital to stock sufficient levels of spare parts for machinery. Additionally, when mechanical breakdowns occur, rush orders for spare parts must be placed, which can significantly increase the cost of the spare parts. The major international equipment suppliers do guarantee parts and labour for one year. For repair of equipment beyond the one-year guarantee, the high cost of brand name spare parts results in producers buying less expensive, and possibly less durable, generic spare parts. In some cases, mobile agribusinesses work with local mechanics to modify or create custom spare parts that can cause long-term damage to the machinery. Dealers expressed interest in establishing lines of credit with financial institutions for spare parts inventory stocking. Additionally, dealers recommended that Yoma Bank or other financial institutions develop a micro-loan product to help mobile agribusinesses finance spare parts purchases. Given that spare parts sales and after-sales services represent approximately 55 per cent of dealer revenue, the development of such a financial product would not only help farmers afford authorised spare parts, but help dealers expand this important business line.

The demand for farm implements that attach to four-wheel tractors, e.g. seeders, fertiliser spreaders and power tillers, is increasing. The costs of farm equipment can range up to USD 6,000. There is currently no financing available for the procurement of farm implements under the AFP.

AWBA Myanmar Allied Farmers Seed Company (MAFSCO) private sector engagement programme

LIFT's funding to this private public sector partnership programme is USD 6.75 million, which will leverage private sector investment and government contributions. AWBA - a Myanmar-owned company focused on agriculture - is LIFT's private sector partner in this initiative. AWBA made a capital investment of USD 3.1 million in the programme. The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI)'s Department of Research's Seed Production Unit contributes foundation and registered seed and MoALI assisted in the identification of land for the processing plant, which will be funded by LIFT through a capital contribution by Myo Thant Myanmar, the company limited by guarantee, that jointly owns the registered company with Awba.

The project's primary goal is to increase the supply of high-quality seeds for beans and pulses via the creation of Pahtama Seeds Co Ltd as a locally-owned company registered that is jointly owned by Awba and Myo Thant Myanmar, a company limited by guarantee with membership and shareholding. Myo Thant Myanmar's will make a capital contribution to the purchase of the land. Dividends and benefits paid are linked to farmers' providing their recurring commitment to seed production.

Impact

The certified seed produced by farmers so far is sufficient, using good agricultural practices, to plant 29,505 acres with certified chickpea, green gram and sesame seed. The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI) has certified the seed. The estimated impact on gross margins is an additional USD 25 per acre (increase in yield of 30 per cent with increased costs associated with good agricultural practices subtracted). The total income effect of certified seed produced so far is around USD 738,000. Seed quality will improve once the processing plant comes online and certified seed grown is tested for moisture, colour, germination etc. The target is for the company's seed production to increase farmers' incomes by an estimated USD 447 million over five years.

To date, 512.6 acres of registered and foundation seed were planted. This comprises of 246 acres of chickpea, 267 acres of green gram, black gram, sesame and soybean. During 2019, the production levels are: 28,607 kg/chickpea; 18,775 kg/green gram; 38,909 kg/sesame. Planting rates for certified seed are: 16.5 kg per acre for chickpea; 5 kg per acre for green gram; 1.5 kg per acre for sesame. These planting rates are significantly lower than what is traditionally practiced by smallholder farmers who plant more seed to account for low germination and viability of the seed traditionally in the market.

Constraints facing seed producers and farmers

Yields of most crops have been extremely variable, from excellent to quite poor. There is a need to develop more stringent farmer selection processes. Field staff require intensive agronomy training to provide a higher level of technical support to growers.

Further, the limited supply of farm labour is a key issue for scaling up production. Access to draught animals for primary land tillage, planting, and field levelling operations is still prevalent. Mechanisation services must therefore be an integral part of the project.

Other issues facing smallholder farmer production are:

- » Herbicide use is not well managed
- » Poor germination due to poor land preparation
- » Mixing of seed lots with grain after harvest
- » Mixing of seed at planting time

Seed processing plant

There were delays in gaining approval for the company structure. This meant a delay in the implementation of the capital expenditure investment by Pathama Seeds in a seed processing plant. Land was selected in Mandalay Division, 1.5 hours' drive from the airport, and negotiations are near completion to purchase the land. AWBA will procure the land with its own funds – a demonstration of LIFT's leveraging in this initiative. In the short term, a small processing line is being procured and will operate in Magway. The project used a SYNMEC machine for processing seeds. To date, the project processed sesame, green gram and chickpea with good results but not for Sinpathadar 3. Thus, it is expected to drop that variety from the programme.

As of December 2019, Pathama Seeds has 20 bags of chickpea Yezin 8 (1,680 kg), 20 bags of chickpea Yezin 6 (24,740 kg), giving a total of 26,420 kg of finished goods ready for sale. Green gram and sesame will be packed in January and February of 2020 (55,512 kg of green gram Yezin 14, 1,574 kg of Magway black sesame, 5,906 kg of Sinpathadar 3, and 16,670 kg of Sinpathadar 14 variety). All the final seed packages will be transferred to ASIC for sale, sole distributor of Pathama Seeds. To encourage seed adoption by farmers ASIC promotes the seed as 'buy 5, get one free'. ASIC also provides free seed to Shwebo growers as a substitute for rice production. Current sale prices are MMK 4,800 (USD 3.10) for 1 kg of black gram, MMK 7,800 (USD 5.10) for 2 kg of green gram/mungbean, MMK 17,900 (USD 11.70) for 2 kg of sesame, MMK 4,950 (USD 3.20) for 20 kg bag of chickpea and an estimated MMK 3,900 (USD 2.50) for 1 kg of soybean.

Mechanisation

There is a strong opportunity for mechanisation of beans and pulses, particularly for planting, spraying and possibly harvesting. Pathama Seeds negotiated a deal with Kramer Bant, a Dutch supplier of machinery for the supply of a state-of-the-art precision planter. While the primary focus is on onion, the larger and more interesting application is with sesame. During the first half of 2020, Pathama Seeds plans to test this machine with sesame growers. Apart from uniform seed distribution, fertiliser application at planting, a key objective will be to reduce seed rate by half. This is key to enabling farmers to invest in high quality seeds while keeping the per acre investment in seed, at similar levels. The project continues to get excellent support from MoALI's Agriculture Mechanization Department although the range of equipment available is limited.

Table 3.3: Progress up to December 2019

| Target | Status as of 31 December 2019 |
|--|--|
| Building the Pathama team | Ongoing - Seed production expertise is developing |
| Establishing the company structure | Completed - Pathama Seeds Co Ltd has been legally incorporated with the start date of 1 January 2020. |
| Recruitment of contract seed growers and farmer members | Ongoing - Total of 218 farmers have been contracted. AWBA is also working with Mercy Corps to support in the recruitment of farmers for Myo Thant Myanmar Co.Ltd (MTM), farmer entity and to lead the set up governance and operations of the limited by guarantee company. Contract services will commence in February 2020. |
| Seed production with contract growers | Farmer contracts are being reviewed after each crop cycle and amended as potential issues arise. About 513 acres have produced 158,861 kg of seeds (green gram, black gram, chickpea, sesame, and soybean). Additional areas to be defined and agreed upon include Kanma in Magway (currently under production) and Kyaukse and Nay Pyi Taw. |
| Processing plant planning and construction | Completed - Sin Phyu Kyun, Magway is the site of the processing plant as well as being a significant production area for several beans and pulses. Processed and packed seeds stored from 2018 production seasons with high germination rate is ready to go to market in 2020 by Ayeyarwady Seeds and Irrigation Co Ltd (ASIC), sole distributor of Pathama Seeds. |

Research and development

The research and development station in Kyaukse is operational and the irrigation system is installed and working well. The main activities include agronomic trials and seed production. Where blocks have not been planted, the project team has planted a green manure crop (sun Hemp) in order to improve the soil health and increase soil organic matter.

Trial data is still inconclusive, and it is expected that this station will change focus on early generation seed production with a lower reliance on trials. This will also help to recoup the operational costs of the station.

Farm Force Application

Farmforce software is currently being used to capture the name, location and geo tagging of the farm site, to develop planting campaigns for crops by seasons, to track off farmer activities, to allow office-based staff to get a snapshot of field activities, to manage loan and inventory, and to track seed lots during transport and storage. The Farmforce® application is operational and the cropping cycle in Kanma planted in May 2019, has been using the loan product feature to track inputs used by farmers. There were some additional features that

needed to be developed and this was done under some more advanced training in August of 2019.

Gender

In the MAFSCO project, female staff hold key positions of Finance Manager and Quality Assurance Manager. Women also have field responsibility for seed production and research and development. It is expected that more key positions will be taken by women as the senior management positions of Processing Manager, and Product Development and Research Development Manager are still vacant. By the end of 2019, the project had employed 27 staff, 18 of which are women. The project's internship program with Yezin Agricultural University resulted in recruitment of nine staff, of which 6 are female. The interns work alongside project staff for around five months for on-job training.

Microfinance Contingent Disaster Liquidity Facility (MFI CDLF)

In the first half of 2019, The Asian Development Bank (ADB) consulted with LIFT and microfinance institutions (MFIs) in Myanmar and concluded there were significant liquidity constraints to expanding microfinance lending in the country. A clear consensus among MFIs emerged regarding the specific need to develop contingent financing arrangements to enable MFIs to meet additional demands for post-disaster recovery lending. In the aftermath of disasters, MFI clients often face challenges relating to servicing of existing debt obligations and accessing new loans to build productive and personal assets and

purchase inputs to renew livelihood activities. MFIs indicated they were able to absorb write-offs, waive interest payments, and re-schedule outstanding loans through existing mechanisms but that limited availability of additional capital prevented them from rapidly scaling-up operations to meet additional borrowing requests. Lack of affordable fresh financing can potentially lead to delayed recovery, reduced revenue-generating livelihood opportunities and/or increased borrowing from informal moneylenders and increased indebtedness.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) sole-sourced LIFT to design a Microfinance Contingent Disaster Liquidity Facility (CDLF) offering contingent loans to MFIs for on-lending to disaster-affected clients for recovery purposes at near-zero interest rates (covering administrative costs and risk of default only).

The contract was signed with ADB in December 2019. The key tasks LIFT will engage in are:

- » Develop a business case for MFI CDLF that includes microfinance institutions and credit cooperatives
- » Design a business plan for the MFI CDLF detailing the governance, management and organisational structure, rules of access, financial plans, risk identification, monitoring and evaluation plan and stakeholder engagement activities
- » Develop and demonstrate a disaster risk assessment methodology
- » Develop MFIs', credit co-operatives' and community capacity development in disaster and recovery planning.

LOOKING AHEAD

LIFT will continue to support MFIs and capital markets in 2020. The Agribusiness Finance Programme will continue and launch its digital financial services component in 2020.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic LIFT plans to increase liquidity for small business loans to offset impacts of economic downturn and will work to improve linkages between finance and agriculture.

3.3 AGRICULTURE, MARKETS & FOOD SYSTEMS

CONTEXT

The agriculture sector contributes approximately 30 per cent to gross domestic product (GDP) and is second only to the services sector in its contribution to economic growth. Nonetheless, approximately 72 per cent of the population lives in rural areas where 85 per cent of poverty is concentrated. With 56 per cent of the nation's labour market positioned in the agriculture sector, it is Myanmar's largest employer.

Over the past several decades, however, the agricultural sector has languished compared to other sectors of the economy³⁰ due to lack of investment in infrastructure, limited financial services and weak extension and research. While there is considerable potential for production and productivity gains in Myanmar agriculture, fisheries and forestry, the sector faces numerous challenges. These include weak rural and border infrastructure; a set of complex, mostly unresolved land tenure issues; low agricultural productivity and competitiveness of agri-food products; an underfunded and poorly organised agricultural research, education and extension system; limited access to timely and quality inputs (i.e. seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, animal health drugs, etc.); insufficient access to financial services; poor quality and safety of agriculture products; weak coordination within line agencies and other stakeholders; and vulnerability to natural disasters (floods, droughts, cyclones, sea level rise) and climate change.

There is also evidence of an 'agrarian transformation' occurring across the sector, in part as response to the improved economic performance and opportunities that have emerged in the labour market.³¹ Labour costs have risen along with a reluctance of young people to engage in the agricultural sector. Changes in the labour market and farmers striving for efficiencies have driven a shift toward mechanisation and a reduction in labour intensive farming systems.

Within the context of this transformation, there is a need to acknowledge potential unintended consequences associated with unsustainable natural resource use and degradation of ecosystem services along with unequal access to these resources by smallholder farmers. Foreign direct investment and the expropriation of resources place smallholder farmers at a significant disadvantage due to their weak bargaining capacity to protect their rights to access to resources. Achieving sustainable development and equal access to these resources will be critical to ensuring equitable and inclusive economic growth

that will contribute to poverty alleviation and meet the aspirations of its people and the country's commitment to the sustainable development goals.

Tapping into the opportunities and addressing the systemic bottlenecks could help to stimulate the contribution of agricultural development to Myanmar's 2030 Agenda commitments and the Sustainable Development Goals targets.

The Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems Programme

The Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems (AMFS) Programme began in 2019 with the phasing out of activities in the Delta and Dry Zone Programmes and the transition to new programming under the LIFT strategy 2019-2023. Dry Zone projects concluded in 2019 and the final Delta projects, the Rice Seed Sector Development Project implemented by Welthungerhilfe and the Linking Laputta to Markets implemented by Mercy Corp in

collaboration with Swisscontact will end in 2020. Several final evaluations were completed in 2019 that provided a wealth of insights and learnings that will inform the development of future investments and provide the basis for programming around agriculture, markets and food systems.

LIFT's new Agriculture, Markets and Food System Programme that began in 2019 supports the transformation of the agricultural sector and the efforts of the Government of Myanmar in implementing the Agricultural Development Strategy (ADS). Key elements of the programme include:

The adoption of an inclusive value chain approach with an emphasis on working with and through private sector actors, the public extension system and relevant market actors to establish scalable and financially sustainable approaches to improve living conditions for poor and vulnerable households.

- » Engagement with government, ethnic armed organisations, the private sector and civil society to generate evidence-based knowledge, promote the piloting of innovative approaches to land allocation, and support land administration reform.
- » Through its focus on nutrition-sensitive agriculture, contribute to improved nutritional outcomes, including through women's empowerment, diversification of available and affordable food when economically viable, and increased income for improved nutrition-related expenditure.

³⁰ ADS 2018. Myanmar Agriculture Development Strategy and Investment Plan (2018-19 – 2022-23),

³¹ ADB 2015. Myanmar: Unlocking the potential. A strategy for high, sustained, and inclusive growth. ADB Economics Working Paper Series No. 437

» To help achieve increased resilience and nutritional security, LIFT supports rural poor households to gain income from a variety of farm and non-farm sources (i.e. beyond crop, livestock and fisheries). Improved market linkages and technical, as well as entrepreneurial skills, will serve to reinforce livelihood strategies and address those households who 'step out' of farming.

With LIFT's shift in focus to the border regions of Myanmar, calls for proposals were launched that specifically focused on Chin, Kachin and northern Shan States and the South-East. The process of programming these new initiatives consumed a significant amount of effort by the Fund Management Office and its partners in 2019. It is anticipated that by the second quarter of 2020 these programmes will be fully functional.

The 2019 highlights are drawn from the active projects in the Delta, Chin, Kachin, northern Shan, Kayin and Kayah States.

HIGHLIGHTS

Delta

Supporting access to quality rice seed

A core focus of LIFT's activities in the Delta 3 Programme was improving the production and availability of quality rice seed to smallholder farmers. Resource poor farmers with limited investment capacity, strategically focus on reducing their input costs in order to maximise the profitability of their production systems. Hence interventions that are low cost and provide a yield advantage contribute to the strategy of cost minimisation. Over the various phases of LIFT's Delta Programme evidence emerged that the use of certified rice seed resulted in an increase in yield of 10 baskets/acre³² compared to traditional approaches of using recycled seed.

The production of certified rice seed is contingent on the supply of early generation registered seed that is produced by the Department of Agriculture (DoA) and the Department of Agriculture Research (DAR) on state-owned seed farms and distributed to seed growers to produce certified seed. Forecasting the demand for early generation seed and supply of certified seed is a significant challenge in ensuring farmers have access to quality seed. The Rice Seed Sector Development (RSSD) project worked to address the issues and is beginning to show positive results from investments in state seed farms and the use of digital smartphone forecasting applications. The project has developed two Apps and one web-

portal³³ to assist the DoA and the DAR in forecasting demand for early generation seed. With the rollout of the Apps and associated training, the platform currently has 2,329 registered users that include 600 seed growers.

The RSSD project made strategic investments in government seed farms to improve infrastructure and the upgrading of seed testing facilities in Pathein. Ninety per cent of construction was completed on four government seed farms and the benefits of these investments are beginning to be realised with farm managers reporting increases of between 15 and 20 per cent in the production of registered seed. The ISO:IEC 17025:2005 EC standard seed testing facility in Pathein was opened by the Ayeyarwady Regional Chief Minister in May 2019 and it is anticipated that this will streamline the certification and seed testing processes in the Delta, which to date were undertaken in Yangon. A total of 48 seed samples were tested during the 2019 summer production season representing a total of 12,726 baskets (279 tonnes seed³⁴) of which 46 samples passed testing, representing 12,336 baskets (271 tonnes) of certified seed.

Increasing the number of profitable, professional and entrepreneurial seed producers providing quality seed to farmers across the Delta, will ensure the sustainability of the rice seed sector and provide a conduit for the introduction of improved genetic material to meet future climates and consumer demand. In 2019, 22 seed grower incentive-grant funds and four companies (Monsoon, Ayer Pathein, Ayertagaon and Kyeikk Latt) successfully completed their investments in enhancing their enterprises. This will have a significant impact on the supply of quality seed to farmers in the Delta over the coming years.

The third Ayeyarwady Seed Sector Platform Meeting and Match Making Session was convened in June 2019 in collaboration with the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF). Participants from DoA, seed farms, seed growers, seed companies, rice millers, traders, banks and NGOs/INGOs attended. The platform is viewed as an important step by the Rice Seed Sector Development (RSSD) project funded by LIFT and the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) to coordinate seed production across the sector. It is anticipated that MRF will take over management and operation of the platform when the RSSD project ends in 2020. A sharing event on contract farming models and public-private partnerships was organised and hosted by RSSD in Yangon to promote the results of the two studies commissioned by the project in cooperation with MRF.

32 Collett, G. 2019. Final Evaluation Integrated Agribusiness and Rural Development Project, May 2019. LIFT.

33 https://www.dropbox.com/s/efj6sd5yje6do4x/EGS%20application%20_Jan%202019.ppsx?dl=0

34 1 basket of rice = 22 kg

Farmer producer enterprises

Mercy Corps with its partners Swisscontact and Ar Yone Oo, implement the Linking Laputta to Markets (LLM) project that promotes the development of farmer producer enterprises (FPE), that engage in collective paddy purchase and storage, collective purchasing of inputs for members and the establishment of revolving funds. There are 113 dedicated input supply and training managers currently embedded in 77 FPEs to coordinate technical training for government, private sector, and NGOs, and identify the required inputs, oversee input distribution and assist with monitoring whether members are using inputs appropriately. The input supply and training managers bridge the gap between FPE members and input dealers, millers, seed traders and agrochemical companies. Through the formation of FPEs and these activities a total value of USD 589,655 was created by the project.

The introduction of an equity-sharing system stimulated interest among 47 FPEs. In the first half of 2019, 24 FPEs started to produce and release their shares to raise additional capital. A total of 584 FPEs' members participated in this process with over MMK 34,480,000 (USD 22,500) raised. Mercy Corps and Ar Yone Oo continued to provide capacity building support for those FPEs in managing their capital and investment in collaboration with the FPE Association (Su Paung Ayeyar), which also engages in supporting FPEs' collective buying of inputs and negotiating and overseeing contract farming.

Farmer-managed schemes for inclusive growth and sustainable development

Metta, through its Promotion of Farmer-Managed Schemes for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development project supported 17 farmers from 11 villages of Mawlamyinegyun Township to grow summer rice using drum seeders for systematic planting as an alternative to broadcast sowing. This method requires significantly less seed to establish the crop (1 basket/acre with the drum seeder versus 3-4 baskets/acre using the traditional broadcasting method). Farmers were also encouraged to reduce their use of fertiliser from three 50kg bags to two bags, resulting in increases in yield of between 10 to 15 baskets/acre. Overuse of fertiliser is commonly observed in rice production systems in the Delta and diminishes yields. In the Labutta area, the project analysed soils and recommended that farmers reduce the fertiliser rates by half. Several farmers who applied Zwe Myanmar bio-fertiliser combined with chemical fertiliser were able to reduce their fertiliser rate by half and gain 7 to 10 baskets/acre in yield. Inappropriate use of fertilisers is clearly associated with a lack of site-specific recommendations and the inability of farmers to access such information.

Co-management of fisheries

The Network Activities Group (NAG) implements the Improved Co-Management of Ayeyarwady Wetland Resources project targeting the co-management of fisheries and policy reform in the fisheries sector of the Delta. A core component of this initiative is to support communities in securing fishing grounds for their exclusive use and management. Through the annual tendering process 166 fishing grounds (119 Inns³⁵, 44 tenders and three open fisheries) were awarded to community groups in 19 townships supported by the project. NAG extended its efforts in promoting the concepts of co-management of fisheries through the establishment of the Min Ta Su Cluster (Pantanaw Township) and Zin Ywe Kyi Cluster (Labutta Township). The clusters generate an understanding of co-management concepts, the formation of fishery co-management groups and the establishment of patrolling committees in the villages to protect the resource.

In cooperation with the Department of Fisheries (DoF), NAG mapped 282 Inn areas in Pantanaw Township and in the process trained staff of the DoF in mapping and geographic information systems. Discussions with the Deputy Union Minister for the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI) resulted in a commitment to extend the mapping area and the updating of Inn boundary demarcations using government resources. The Regional Government Land Use Department allocated MMK 164,450,000 (USD 108,000) to support the updating of Inn maps in the 2019/2020 budget. This is a significant development and clearly demonstrates that the work and approach developed by the project has relevance to the Myanmar Government.

The collection of revenue from the Ayeyarwady Delta's freshwater fisheries is important for both the Regional and Union Governments. A community-led fisheries revenue collection approach has the advantage of providing a more robust and systematic fishery taxation system led by fishers, improving accountability of fishers and reducing the role of the Department of Fisheries (DoF) in the revenue collection process. The LIFT-funded project is piloting this approach in three townships in the Delta with the support of the Fisher Development Associations and the DoF.

The upgrading of the Pyapon Fishery Training Centre was completed in August 2019. The training centre delivers short courses to DoF staff. NAG also supported the DoF to develop the curriculum and resource materials associated with value chain development and small-scale aquaculture. Further, the project has facilitated training courses on fresh shrimp, marine shrimp and mud crab production and grow out³⁶ culture.

³⁵ Inns are water areas that are demarcated for fishing. These are leased by individuals who have fishing rights.

³⁶ It is the stocking of two species in the same pond but during different seasons or time of culture (in cases where the two species have different culture seasons depending on the availability of seeds for stocking)

Dry Zone

The International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) implemented the USD 4.46 million LIFT-funded Agro-Input and Farm Services project in the Dry Zone from December 2015 through to June 2019. The project supported Myanmar's agro-input sector by strengthening a network of 55 agricultural input and service providers while improving the incomes and productivity for more than 31,000 smallholder farmers through quality input use, access to technical advice and information, and reduced vulnerability to crop failure. During the 3.5 years, the project conducted 480 training sessions followed by refresher courses for approximately 10 per cent of participants. The input service providers initiated and funded an additional 166 training events together with DoA (869 staff days) for more than 17,700 farmers in six townships (Pakokku, Yesagy, Myingyan, Nahtogyi, Taungthar and Mahlaing) in the Magway and Mandalay Regions. This has proven to be a successful model in linking the private sector input service providers with conventional extension services provided by the Department of Agriculture.

During the first half of the year, IFDC with its partners, John Deere and New Holland, conducted training sessions for 240 tractor operators on tractor safety, maintenance, controls and instruments, preparation for field operations and good agronomic practices. This has allowed tractor owners and operators to improve the quality of their service to clients as well as providing sound agricultural advice to farmers.

Uplands

Farmer training and input service suppliers

IFDC is replicating its successful approaches in the Dry Zone in Upland areas and received a USD 1.59 million costed-extension to implement its approaches to farmer training in Loikaw and Demoso Townships in Kayah State and Hpa-An, Kawkareik and Kyainseikgyi Townships in Kayin State from January 2019 to June 2020. Since

inception, the project team has trained 4,164 farmers (38 per cent women) in conservation agriculture, post-harvest management of commodities, crop budgeting, integrated nutrient management, nutrition and finance. IFDC applied learnings from its Dry Zone activities to adjust the training approach that now focuses on returning to the same group of farmers with different modules, contributing to effective skill building and knowledge exchange.

Twenty-three demonstrations were established by the project in collaboration with farmers, Department of Agriculture (DoA) extension officers and input service providers on improved farming practices associated with paddy, sesame, gram, vegetables, and maize. The impact of these simple agronomic improvements is clearly evident. Average profits for maize improved by 82 per cent from 2018 to 2019,

and for paddy the average profits increased by 58 per cent. The dominant contributing factors to profitability was improved fertiliser management (split applications resulting in lower rates of application), timely pest control (i.e. Fall Armyworm monitoring), soil management, and improved variety selection. The greatest gross margins for each crop were: MMK 880,000 (USD 580) per acre for a 10 ton per hectare paddy crop in Loikaw, MMK 711,000 (USD 470) per acre for a 400 kg per hectare sesame crop in Kyarinseikgyi and MMK 480,000 (USD 315) per acre for a 10 ton per hectare maize crop in Loikaw.

Thirty new input service providers engaged with the project and are receiving enhancement grants of USD 10,000 each along with coaching to support the growth of their businesses and support farmer demonstrations in collaboration with DoA extension staff. To receive the grant ISPs are required to invest a minimum of USD 2,000 of their own funds to support this initiative. ISPs hosted 76 training sessions for 4,048 farmers (40 per cent women) and held 27 field days at the demonstration sites, for 2,245 farmers (36 per cent women). The impact of the training is beginning to bear fruit - a Kayin farmer reportedly produced a crop of eggplants on an acre generating an income of MMK 9 million (USD 5,900).

Due to the outbreak of Fall Armyworm (FAW) in Kayah State where a significant proportion of cropping is maize, IFDC provided training on integrated pest management, monitoring, and safe application of crop protection products to control FAW. These activities were coordinated with IFDC and the Fertiliser Sector Improvement project for 287 farmers. FAW training was also delivered to 75 participants from the Department of Agriculture and input service providers.

Value chain development in Kachin and northern Shan State

Since mid-2016, the Uplands Food Security and Participation in Markets (UFS-PM) project implemented by Metta in Kachin and northern Shan State has attempted to increase economic returns for farmers and to improve natural resource management through establishing community forests and the promotion of agro-forestry-based systems for crops that include ginger, turmeric and elephant foot yam.

The UFS-PM project supports farmer-owned and managed agro-enterprise value chain activities centred around the production of groundnut and mustard oil. Six processing units were established. In the first half of 2019, a collective marketing and distribution centre was established in Myitkyina and there was significant progress in connecting traders and retailers in the marketing of the oil produced in Kachin. Fifty-seven wholesalers and 44 retailers are procuring the products produced through the processing of groundnut and mustard seed. The business model was restructured and producer

groups of farmers producing the raw product were formed. Farmers are paid on delivery of product to cluster management committees (CMC) that operate the mills. A shareholder scheme at the CMC level was introduced allowing interested producer group members to become shareholders of the CMCs. The price of a share is MMK 50,000 (USD 33) and an individual can buy a maximum of 20 shares. In 2019, MMK 60,550,000 (USD 39,600) was raised through the sale of shares. Shareholders receive dividends when the profits of the CMCs are shared. This approach allows the CMCs to generate sufficient working capital to procure raw materials for year-round processing.

The development of these agro-enterprises has not been without challenges, common to most small- and medium-sized enterprises. In 2019, steps were taken to address the profitability of these enterprises. Steps included increasing the skills of operators to undertake routine machine maintenance, improving oil extraction efficiencies that increased from 1.2 to 2 viss per basket for groundnut and 4.2 to 5.2 viss per basket for mustard oil, revising business plans and reducing labour costs. The CMC also found lucrative markets for oil cake and second grade oil with local private sector actors that contributed to increased income for units.

Natural resource management in Kachin and northern Shan State

The second component of the UFS-PM project is centred around improved management of natural resources through community forests and associated agro-forestry. This has significant implications for restoring degraded landscapes and mitigating the impacts of climate change through establishing high-value tree species and sustainable utilisation of the understory through cultivation of shade tolerant crops that include ginger, turmeric and elephant foot yam. The project focused efforts on farmer field schools as a way of increasing skills in managing these systems. Forest user groups are formed as a prerequisite in the development of forest plans and the official registration of community forests. The project mobilised farmer field schools in 26 villages (nine in Kachin, 17 in northern Shan), enrolling 833 farmers (31 per cent women). The farmer field schools provide training in natural resource management, community forestry and agro-forestry techniques. The project supported turmeric and ginger production in Kachin State and elephant foot yam in northern Shan. Activities with respect to community forest registration and land tenure were wound back from mid-year. By June 2019, 2,097 viss (3 metric tons) of ginger and 11,034 viss (18 metric tons) of turmeric were harvested by 158 farmers. In 2019, ginger prices rose while raw turmeric prices dropped. Farmers under their own initiative began processing harvested turmeric to increase sales and profitability.

A survey of 40 of the 158 farmers who grew ginger found that 38 of them made an average profit of MMK 88,900 (USD 58) per farmer. Two farmers made no profit. With turmeric, all 40 of those surveyed made a profit of around MMK 98,400 (USD 64).

In the first half of 2019, 18 of the 26 natural resource management villages (eight in Kachin, 10 in northern Shan) established community forestry committees made up of 111 members (28 per cent women). They submitted proposals for community forestry certification to the Forest Department. The registration process is ongoing with significant delays due to change in processes, the continual churn of Forest Department staff affecting continuity in managing submissions, and the continuing conflict in some areas.

Nutrition-sensitive agriculture in Chin State

The Securing Positive Nutritional Outcome through Agriculture Extension, Nutritional Education and Institution Building in Rural Chin State (NOAC) project implemented by the Myanmar Institute for Integrated Development (MIID) with partners Cornell University and Yezin Agricultural University finished in September 2019. The project supported the implementation of nutrition-sensitive agriculture in Chin State's Hakha Township. The project focused on:

Advisory services for improved production of agricultural goods

The promotion of integrated farming including livestock and fish production, home production systems, nutrition education, and linkages between smallholder farmers and markets.

Women's leadership and strengthening of local academic and government institutions involved in agriculture extension and agriculture education. Developing manuals to be used as teaching materials in the State Agricultural Institute and to support students and extension practitioners in their efforts to promote improved agricultural outputs in Chin.

In the first half of 2019, the project continued a new season of work placements for State Agricultural Institute (SAI) students that combined field visits with training on-site ensuring that the maximum number of students could participate. Significant effort went into documenting learnings around farmer field schools. The learnings include the experiences of CORAD, also funded by LIFT in Chin State. Learnings will be published for dissemination.

In support of nutritional messaging, more than 1,000 people (60 per cent women) joined activities in 15 villages in 2019. Advanced training was given to key participant farmers in March and May and the project shared its complete Food Production and Consumption Calendar datasets with the LEARN³⁷ team to inform the production of new recipes.

37 Leveraging Essential Nutrition Actions to Reduce Malnutrition (<https://myanmar.savethechildren.net/our-consortiums/leveraging-essential-nutrition-actions-reduce-malnutrition-learn>)

A challenge confronting the intensification of home-based poultry production in Chin is availability of feed. MIID introduced vermiculture to seven villages through farmer-led training and 15 farmers began vermiculture production using the outputs as chicken feed and the vermiwash as a nutrient source for home gardens.

The Promoting Agricultural Diversification and Economic Integration in Northern Chin State project implemented by CORAD, GRET and CRS-KMSS continues to support farmers by introducing improved farming practices for remote communities in northern Chin and building resilience to climate change into farming systems. The project has continued farmer demonstrations and community engagement on slash and mulch, system rice intensification, integrated soil fertility management and improved rice seed production. These interventions provide farmers with the tools to improve productivity and move away from traditional shifting cultivation practices to sedentary farming systems and associated intensification. In 2019, more than 9,000 rice and vegetable farmer households were trained in seed selection. Village technical facilitators were trained on improving farming systems and water management and demonstration plots established for disseminating this extension knowledge. Through this exposure 8,062 farmers adopted a basic set of improved practices and 5,252 farmers reported increased rice and vegetable production.

The promotion of homestead production systems was essential in securing food and nutritional security for these remote communities. The project took a two-prong approach to addressing the challenge. Collective gardens were established benefitting more than 600 households and almost 4,000 households were supported with individual gardens. Surpluses generated from collective and individual vegetable production were sold into local markets or exchanged within the villages. These efforts were supported with the promotion of nutrition-sensitive information and messaging that reached more than 10,000 households in the project area.

Connecting farmers to markets is an important component of the CORAD project. Eighteen producer groups with 4,295 members were formed around key commodities, including onions, grapes, tree beans and elephant foot yam. Members of producer groups were trained to improve their access to market information for specific crops and acquire the necessary management, marketing and technical skills to effectively link with buyers and input providers. Through these efforts 3,221 producer group members increased their incomes through improved negotiated prices, increased sale volumes, and improved quality. Grape producer groups improved productivity by up to 50 per cent

in two years through improved pruning techniques. Elephant foot yam producer groups adopted slash and mulch practices, improved drying techniques, and achieved group sales at negotiated prices based on market prices. Onion producer groups achieved improvements of between 50-100 per cent in productivity through expansion onto irrigated terraces. Improved storage practices resulted in a 50 per cent increase in market prices.

Land

Land re-allocation

The controversial amendments to the *Vacant, Virgin and Fallow Land Law* (VFV) adopted by the Government in September 2018, continued to raise concerns with CSOs and other parties in the first half of 2019. This had significant implications for the rollout of LIFT's REAL DEV Programme. LIFT's Fund Management Office initiated consultations in February 2019 with CSOs and government line agencies enabling concerns over the amendments to be aired. An independent monitoring and documentation mechanism was proposed to ensure international best practice was adhered to in the allocation of land. Procurement for services were initiated in December 2019 through a competitive process to seek expressions of interest. Revisions were made to the proposed approach in the implementation of the programme in consultation with the successful implementing partners, Land Core Group and the Network Activities Group (NAG), and government line agencies. The programme was approved by the Fund Board and is currently being implemented.

It is of note that even with the concerns raised by CSOs, INGOs and UN organisations over the public announcement made on October 30, 2018 calling for those currently using VFV land without Central Committee permission to apply for a permit by March 2019, the government did not alter its stance on this matter. Sections 30 (A-C) in the amended VFV law (2018) describes *Taung Ya* lands, customary lands, lands for the religious, social, health, and transport that shall not be governed by this law, however the definition and terms of the land categories have yet to be legally defined.

Customary land tenure

CSOs and INGOs took the initiative through a workshop convened by GRET in Yangon to move forward on promoting recognition of customary tenure. With the support of The Border Consortium (TBC) and KESAN, the Karen National Union organised the Kaw³⁸ Customary Land Management System Forum in May 2019 and released a statement on behalf of participants indicating their commitment to promoting Kaw and an ethnic customary land system. TBC organised a workshop in Yangon in August 2019

³⁸ Kaw in Karen language means area, region, state and territory

highlighting issues for internally displaced people and the challenges related to their land tenure security and land access. During an institutional review workshop, LCG and the Department of Agriculture, Land Management and Statistics discussed how to deal with customary land tenure.

Land disputes resolution

Several of LIFTs IPs are working with communities to address land disputes at the local level. These include Metta in its Upland Food Security and Participating in Market project, Land Core Group, The Border Consortium through its STAND UP project and KDN through its project in Tanintharyi Region. The natural resources management component of Metta's project supports a participatory planning process and the certification of community forests. In 2019, Metta, in collaboration with members of Lu Myang village in Kachin State, submitted a claim for 200 acres of lands that were confiscated to develop a banana plantation. Through the advocacy efforts of the project the community was able to reclaim these lands that have now been returned.

LCG continued to support partner CSOs in providing awareness training on land laws and land rights to farmers and provided refresher training to their trainers. In Magway, trainers of LCG trainer-of-trainer programme became members of Land Acquisition Reinvestigation Committees. The LCG team is working with CSOs in Bago to address challenges with land concessions as well as applying for the allocation of VFV land to landless people in the community. The activities of LCG and CSOs have empowered communities to take on companies that are illegally acquiring land and in one case farmers prevented a company from illegally expanding its operations in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture Land Management and Statistics.

The efforts of LCG and its partners supported farmers to register their land and receive Form 7 (359 households), community forest registration (15 individuals for 50 acres) and in one case extending a road to their farmland. In 2019, LCG also supported five paralegals who have registered 75 cases from 45 village tracts in the Delta and closed five cases. A noteworthy case was the return of 513 acres that were taken 40 years ago to six farmers.

Land research

GRET's land research project that began in May 2013 ended in June 2019. During the project period GRET conducted:

- » In-depth land research studies across geographic and urban settings
- » Independent land reallocation assessments at 24 sites in Ayeyarwady, Sagaing, Mandalay, Bago and Magway
- » A cross-cutting study based on the 24 land assessments

- » Land tenure studies under dual administration systems in Tanintharyi
- » Policy briefs on VFV lands and landlessness

These in-depth anthropological and social research studies revealed the complexity and fragmentation of Myanmar's land sector, the importance of land to livelihoods, weaknesses in Myanmar's land governance and administration mechanisms, and the political and social complexity associated with land rights and tenure. The research findings were shared with respective regional governments in Ayeyarwady, Sagaing, and Bago, to parliamentarians, relevant union-level government line agencies and CSOs.

Under the LCG project, a number of land research and studies were conducted in 2019. These included comparative studies on land use and land use change in Myanmar; land and gender; land and forest governance in Naga; responsibility and accountability of private companies in resource extraction, Mon State; land grabbing in Myanmar: processes, impacts and compensation issues in southern Shan State; customary tenure and security in mixed authority areas in Kayin State; 10 CSO case studies on land grabbing in Myanmar, and a participatory photographic initiative titled *Land governance Through a Different Lens: Using Participatory Photography with Myanmar's female farmers*.

Natural resource management planning

Communities reached by the Uplands Food Security and Participation in Markets project who are involved in natural resources management developed plans to protect their land tenure rights and manage their local natural resources collectively and sustainably. Twenty-five planning teams were formed in 25 villages (nine in Kachin, 16 in northern Shan). The natural resource management planning teams involved 325 members (32 per cent women). The teams brought together diverse, multi-ethnic groups, village administrators, women leaders, shopkeepers, religious leaders, farmers, traders, and youth. In Kachin, the nine planning teams all progressed their plans and three of them decided to create a joint plan. A key outcome of this activity was increased awareness of land insecurity, which led to increases in land registrations in conjunction with the relevant government authorities. In some cases, the villagers aimed to reclaim farmlands that were taken. One village was able to use its natural resource management plan to reclaim 200 acres of land that were confiscated by a banana plantation. A common feature of the plans involves changes to the content of the Land Form 7 certificates that grant the right to use land.

Policy

The Linking Laputta to Markets project and its engagement with Global World Insurance on piloting a crop insurance scheme provides an opportunity to test the marketability of crop insurance products. The project is providing inputs on specific needs for the Insurance Business Regulatory Board (IBRD) around a regulatory framework and other aspects associated with the creation of an enabling environment. Recognising that there is a long way to go before the industry matures and thrives, for Mercy Corps, the pilot offers a transformative opportunity in establishing a direction for IBRD, Global World Insurance and the crop insurance industry. Through a policy advocacy framework, Mercy Corps, together with other development partners, such as AgriPro Focus, ICCO, Myanmar Rice Federation, engaged in discussions around agriculture insurance laws in Myanmar that will also cover livestock and other agricultural insurance products in addition to crop insurance.

The by-laws for the *Ayeyarwaddy Regional Freshwater Fishery Law* of 2018 were enacted in April 2019. The law provides the long sought after legal basis for community fisheries co-management. LIFT's strategic partner **NAG** contributed to the development of qualification requirements for establishing a Community Fishery Association, which are set out in the by-laws. In collaboration with the Department of Fisheries, NAG facilitated a community awareness campaign on the law and its by-laws that has covered 19 townships across the Delta targeting 239 villages. While significant advances were made in reforming freshwater fishery laws in the Ayeyarwady that encapsulate pro-poor policies and create a legal basis for community fisheries co-management, these reforms face several challenges that will need to be addressed to ensure that they remain effective.

Private Sector Engagement

Mercy Corps in activities associated with the LIFT-funded Linking Laputta to Markets project partnered with Global World Insurance (GWI) to pilot a weather index-based insurance scheme. Results from the pilot while highlighting challenges and constraints (i.e. access to long-term climate data, limited reliable weather stations) encouraged the company to expand the pilot from 200 to 5,000 acres in 2019. GWI established strategic partnerships with rice companies to bundle its insurance products with other services provided by rice companies to farmers. Other private sector insurance providers (Myanma Insurance and Sompo Japan Nipponkoa Insurance Inc.) are also moving into this space through further pilots, which may provide opportunities to share the risk of weather-based shocks that rice farmers face in the Delta associated with current and future climates thereby building resilience of farmer households.

The Linking Laputta to Markets project initiated additional market-based models in the Delta, while continuing to strengthen the organisational capacity of farmer producer enterprises. A scheme for fixed-price contract production of paddy was initiated with U Hla Yee, a champion miller and rice trader. The contract farming initiative addresses the underlying constraints faced by both farmer producer enterprises and millers to build a mutually reinforcing market opportunity in the rice value chain. For the miller, this scheme ensures a consistent supply of paddy of a desired quality, at the right time and with a relatively low search cost. For farmers this makes small-scale farming more competitive as contracted farmers can access improved quality of seeds in an assured market with a fixed price, reducing marketing and transaction costs. Under this new model, both parties entered into contract production with an assured price under specific terms and conditions. The activity continued in the 2018/19 summer season with Golden Sunland and has since been expanded with more traders/millers engaged. With the second year of promoting fixed-price contract farming, there are indications of crowding-in in the market systems as other millers/traders also displayed an interest in the model. A total number of 2,277 acres of paddy farms were under contract farming in 2019 (both the monsoon 2019 season and the summer 2019/2020 seasons) with seven rice buyers engaged, with the total value of around USD 933,120 of contracted paddy. Specifically, for Golden Sunland, in addition to the existing partnerships with Awba (an input company) and Village Link (an agriculture technology solution provider), a new partnership with a Fintech – Daung Capital was established for the summer crop for value chain financing.

A core output of the Linking Laputta to Markets project is to connect market actors in the rice value chain to improved access to finance. In 2019, the project team continued to assist millers, traders and farmer producer enterprises to engage with the finance sector (i.e. KBZ, AYA Bank, CB Bank, A Bank, Fullerton) through business-matching meetings and tailored support e.g. assisting in preparing business plans. The project supported millers in their efforts to access other potential sources of finance, including through the green finance schemes provided by the Responsible Business Fund. Through these efforts two market actors received loans in 2019 of approximately MMK 60,000,000 (USD 39,000) in total to upgrade milling facilities.

LOOKING AHEAD

As the Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems Programme moves ahead with the implementation of the strategic shifts with a greater focus on conflict-affected areas, there is a need to recognise that the gains made in the Delta and Dry Zone will be difficult to emulate in the short to medium term in these areas. These regions have been neglected with respect to agricultural development due to a combination of drivers that include conflict, remoteness, lack of infrastructure development and associated skills. Consequently, markets and value chains are nascent, poorly developed and in some cases, still to be developed. There is a need to focus on ensuring that the basic building blocks that would facilitate the emergence of functional value chains are in place. This will require building the skills and capacities of farmers, entrepreneurs and ethnic armed organisations' departments responsible for agriculture, along with nurturing existing commodity value chains and linking them to markets.

The programme will continue to support smallholder farmers to improve productivity and ensure the viability of their farming enterprises. This will require a shift away from specialisation in a single commodity to diversified and integrated farming systems. Diversification provides households with a range of income generating opportunities that provide a buffer to price fluctuations and climate variability. Building resilience will allow farmers to adapt to future climates and reduce their risks. There are impediments that restrict diversification and integration of farming systems that are associated with the classification and categorisation of land and its use. There is a need to review the policy impediments that are restrictive and limit the ability of farmers to make decisions on the use of their land. With the current dialogue and formulation of a national land law this is an opportune time to revise the current land categorisation/use system approach that would place much of the decision-making processes in the hands of farmers. This will create an enabling environment that is much needed in transforming smallholder farming systems and placing them on a sound footing to sustainability and viability.

The promotion of sustainability and building resilience to future climates is core to the Agricultural, Markets and Food Systems Programme. The judicious use of inputs and the promotion of regenerative farming practices will contribute to the notion of safe, clean and green products. The inclusion of pulses as an integral component in farming systems and the use of animal wastes as soil amendments and fertilisers contribute to the notion of safe, clean and green food production systems. Optimising these systems that take advantage of benefits that accrue will be critical.



CASE STUDY

Ma Kyi Phyu Khin is recognised and rewarded for her sewing skills

Ma Kyi Phyu Khin is an ethnic Shanni who grew up in 10 Mile Village in Kachin State. There were no job opportunities for her there so she started looking for other ways to support her family. Through Facebook, she learned about the Aung Myin Hmu training centre in North Dagon. She was interested in attending skills training for the garment sector but was unsure about whether the opportunity was real: "I was worried that Aung Myin Hmu training centre was a fake because it sounded too good to be true".

After a phone call to Aung Myin Hmu staff and discussions with her mother, Ma Kyi Phyu Khin decided to take a chance. The long journey to Yangon started with a two-hour motorcycle ride to reach Moe Nyin, then a full-day train journey to Mandalay and then another 16-hour train journey to Yangon.

At the training centre, Ma Kyi Phyu Khin joined a group of young women studying to become sewing machine operators in a garment factory. During her two months of training, she built strong friendships and learned sewing techniques in demand in workplaces. She participated in training on labour

rights, sexual harassment and soft skills that would help her succeed in her work. Ma Kyi Phyu Khin found a job at MTT garment factory as a sewing machine operator after graduating from Aung Myin Hmu. She immediately benefitted from her training as the factory was forced to reduce staffing but kept her on because of her competency and skills. Reflecting on the experience, she said: "I'm so lucky that I could keep my job. Aung Myin Hmu trained me very well to be a professional sewing machine operator in a garment factory".

Now 20 years old, Ma Kyi Phyu Khin earns MMK 250,000 per month (USD 175). With this money, she is able to live in Yangon and support her family every month. She recently passed the basic level skills assessment for sewing machine operators and earned her certification from the National Skills Standards Authority.



CASE STUDY

U Saw Tin Win becomes a change agent on sexual harassment

U Saw Tin Win is a Member of Parliament in the Lower House and sits on the Labour and Farmers Affairs Committee. He participated in a recent study tour to India organised by Fair Wear Foundation to learn how they have addressed sexual harassment in their garment sector. Although he felt that the study tour was useful, he was not entirely convinced that integrating articles related to sexual harassment in the *Occupational Safety and Health Law* was the right approach.

Following the study tour, U Saw Tin Win joined CARE's gender-based violence workshop where he attended a session discussing the problem of gender-based discrimination in Myanmar. The discussion had a strong impact on him and he informed CARE he would invite them to provide a similar training for all National League for Democracy MPs in the future.

CARE and its advocacy partners then approached U Saw Tin Win to seek his cooperation on incorporating provisions on sexual harassment in the new Occupational Safety and Health Law. He agreed and shared critical information related to parliamentary timelines and procedures to support advocacy in the Upper House. He also provided contact information so that a meeting could be arranged with the Bill Committee in the Lower House.

U Saw Tin Win discussed the issue with the Secretary of the Bill Committee, putting his personal support behind the proposal to include sexual harassment in the draft law. When asked by the Secretary of the Bill Committee what his opinion was as a representative of the Labour and Farmers Affairs Committee, he said: "what they proposed is very complete and I have no objection".

U Saw Tin Win kept in close touch with CARE and its advocacy partners throughout the amendment process. He took the initiative to call several times to obtain more information to present to the Bill Committee in order to strengthen the case for the proposal and overcome any resistance.

After a successful vote to include five of the requested changes on gender-sensitivity and sexual harassment in the law, U Saw Tin Win informed CARE and its partners that this was the first time they had ever received 70 votes to support changes to a bill that had already passed through the Joint Bill Committee.

3.4 DECENT WORK AND LABOUR MOBILITY

CONTEXT

Myanmar's transition towards a more open and market-oriented economy is accelerating the mobility of workers between employment sectors and geographic locations. The shift from agricultural livelihoods in rural areas to wage employment in the service and manufacturing sectors in cities is increasing, driven by expanding foreign direct investment and international trade. Myanmar's economic growth has brought with it improved prospects for workers to find better remunerated work within the labour market, including for a growing number of workers who are pursuing employment abroad.

However, the rapid changes to the nature of employment in Myanmar have also brought significant challenges in ensuring conditions of decent work. Decades of military rule and isolation from the international community has contributed to a labour market governance framework that is outdated, contradictory and vague. Limitations remain in the capacity of stakeholders to ensure labour rights are provided, as well as awareness of these rights among the workforce. There are deeply entrenched obstacles to achieving respect for diversity and institutionalising principles of non-discrimination. Establishing harmonious social dialogue and industrial relations continues to be restricted through the suppression of labour organising, requiring a whole new culture of engagement, negotiation and compromise.³⁹

Primarily due to the structural vulnerability of poor and marginalised populations, severe cases of exploitation continue to occur. Reports show that the use of forced labour remains a significant problem, taking a number of different forms, which include underage recruitment into the military and armed ethnic groups, forced portering (particularly in conflict zones) and forced labour within public and private sector enterprises. It is believed to be more prevalent in rural locations, particularly in those areas affected by conflict.⁴⁰ Some migrants also experience human trafficking during the process of going abroad for work, with cases identified in Thailand, China, Malaysia, the Middle East and the United States.⁴¹

The heavily gendered division of labour poses a particular obstacle for women's empowerment in Myanmar. Women are disproportionately responsible for performing unpaid household and care work, which limits their ability to participate in the labour force. Women's remunerated work is concentrated in lower paid forms of employment, largely due to discriminatory social norms that restrict their options. Work in the garment industry has been an important source of income for many women in Myanmar but it has also been associated with sexual harassment, gender pay gaps and poor working conditions.⁴² As women are assumed to have 'nimble fingers', they are thought to be more effective as workers in detailed manual labour jobs, such as sewing machine operators. In addition, some employers consider women to be more obedient and easier to control than men in factory settings.⁴³

To respond to these critical obstacles to sustainable and inclusive social and economic development in Myanmar, LIFT expanded its programming outside the scope of its traditional rural and agrarian focus. Within the refreshed LIFT Strategy 2019-2023, the Decent Work and Labour Mobility Programme has been established as a core thematic area. Under the programme's framework, the protection of fundamental labour rights is being promoted to build a solid foundation for decent work in Myanmar.

The programme strategy is based on the achievement of three main outcomes: (1) Strengthened policies and legislation on labour and social protection, migration governance, anti-trafficking and skills development; (2) enhanced knowledge and capacity of stakeholders to support decent work, labour mobility and anti-trafficking; and (3) increased access to information, training and support services for women and men migrants and other vulnerable workers.

³⁹ International Labour Organization. (2018). Decent Work Diagnostic Report: Myanmar's Progress and Challenges. Yangon.

⁴⁰ International Labour Organization. (2019). Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations Geneva.

⁴¹ US State Department. (2019). Trafficking in Persons Report. Washington DC.

⁴² Kusakabe, K. and Melo, C. (2019). Jobs in SEZs: Migrant garment factory workers in the Mekong region. Chiang Mai.

⁴³ International Labour Organization. (2019). Weaving Gender: Challenges and opportunities for the Myanmar garment industry. Yangon.

Table 3.4: LIFT-funded projects on Decent Work and Labour Mobility

| Implementing partner | Project name | Geographic coverage | Budget (USD) | Duration |
|--|--|---|--------------|-----------|
| ActionAid | Safe Migration for Decent Work in the Peri-Urban Areas of Yangon (SECURE) | Yangon | 2.5 million | 2019-2022 |
| Adventist Development and Relief Agency | Vocational Education to Support IDPs and Host Communities in Kachin and Northern Shan State (VESI) | Kachin, Shan | 2.2 million | 2019-2022 |
| BBC Media Action | Decent Work and Labour Migration for Media (Yay Kyi Yar) | Nationwide | 3 million | 2016-2020 |
| CARE | Industry Solutions for Safe Employment (Aung Myin Hmu) | Yangon | 6 million | 2017-2021 |
| Eden Myanmar | Eden Project to Rescue Myanmar Migrant Women and Girls who have been Trafficked for the Purposes of Sexual Exploitation or Forced Marriage | Yangon, Shan | 1 million | 2017-2021 |
| International Labour Organization | Development of Internal and International Labour Migration Governance | Nationwide | 4 million | 2016-2020 |
| International Organization for Migration | Increasing the Developmental Impact of Labour Migration through Strengthened Governance and Partnerships (Twe Let) | Chin, Mandalay, Magway, Shan, Mon, Kayin, Tanintharyi | 13 million | 2017-2021 |
| International Organization for Migration | Capitalising on Human Mobility for Poverty Alleviation and Inclusive Development in Myanmar (CHIME) | Nationwide | 2 million | 2016-2019 |
| International Organization for Migration | Migration as a Livelihood Diversification Strategy in the Delta (MILDAS) | Ayeyarwady | 1.5 million | 2015-2020 |
| International Organization for Migration | Strengthening the Resilience of Conflict-Affected Communities in Kachin and Northern Shan States through Increased Safe and Rewarding Migration (SAFE) | Kachin, Shan | 1.2 million | 2019-2022 |
| People in Need | Empowering Labour Migrants in Shwe Pyi Thar (Aye Chan Thaw Ein) | Yangon | 3.2 million | 2019-2022 |
| Women's Organization Network | Ending Vulnerability and Exploitation of Migrant Workers (EVE) | Yangon | 1.1 million | 2019-2022 |
| World Vision | See, Hear, Empower: Supporting inclusive and transformative livelihoods for IDP and host communities in Kachin (SHE) | Kachin | 2.6 million | 2019-2022 |

HIGHLIGHTS

Strengthened policies and legislation on labour and social protection, migration governance, anti-trafficking and skills development

The International Labour Organization's (ILO) Development of Internal and International Migration Governance (DIILM) project has been working with key tripartite stakeholders and civil society organisations to ensure that Myanmar's labour migration governance framework enables women and men to migrate safely and benefit from their migration experiences. A key achievement during 2019 was the lifting of the ban on Myanmar domestic workers migrating abroad following extensive advocacy by the ILO, civil society and labour organisations. It was

announced that the Myanmar Overseas Employment Agency Federation will be permitted to send domestic workers to Hong Kong, Macau, Singapore and Thailand through legal channels. The policy was first enacted in 2014 and has had the unintended effect of forcing Myanmar domestic workers to migrate in an irregular legal status, making them more vulnerable to abuse. Removal of the ban creates an opportunity to expand labour rights protection for domestic workers making the move abroad so they can obtain safe and fair employment.

Another important result of the ILO's policy engagement is the drafting of a bill on labour protection for domestic workers. The Women and Peace Parliament group developed a plan with the Amoytha Hluttaw Committee on Local and Overseas Workers to move forward with development of the law following a series of technical discussions organised



Kyaw Htwe, Chair of the Immigration, Local and Overseas Workers Committee, announces the drafting of a law on labour protection for domestic workers.

by the ILO. The findings of a gap analysis comparing Myanmar law and international standards for the protection of domestic workers' rights and a public opinion survey on domestic work was presented to support a more informed debate. Currently, domestic workers do not receive protection under Myanmar's labour laws and have few ways to access justice for situations of exploitation and abuse.

Though progress has been challenging due to deeply entrenched attitudes devaluing domestic work in Myanmar, the development of a legislative instrument to protect their labour rights represents a major step forward, particularly if it is aligned with the articles of the ILO *Domestic Workers Convention, 2011* (C189). This would grant domestic workers the same labour and social protection entitlements as other sectors, fully recognizing domestic work as work like any other. On International Migrants Day 2019, it was announced that a bill on labour protection for domestic workers had been developed and is currently under review.

At the request of the Union Government, the ILO also provided technical inputs to a number of policies and legislation to align them with international labour standards. The development of the second *National Plan of Action on the Management of Labour Migration* was supported by ensuring the inclusion of labour organisations and civil society in its formulation and implementation, and was launched by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population on 11 May 2019. The plan provides a comprehensive strategy for managing international labour migration, promoting decent work for Myanmar migrants abroad and protecting their labour rights.

In addition, the ILO provided technical comments to the Social Security Board on the draft *Memorandum*

of Collaboration on Social Security between Malaysia and Myanmar to support portability of benefits for migrant workers. Comments were also delivered on the draft of the revised *Employment and Skills Development Act* (to be renamed the *Occupational Skills Development Law*). The ILO encouraged the Government to organise a tripartite consultation on the amended law through the Technical Working Group on Labour Law Reform to ensure social dialogue during the formulation process.

The ILO worked to improve the settlement of labour disputes during the year through development of practical rules for implementation. Following the adoption of the new *Settlement of Labour Disputes Law* in June 2019, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population commenced a tripartite consultation process to develop the Rules to implement the revised legal framework. After their submission for approval, the Union Minister requested that a further workshop be convened to reconsider some of the articles where there were significant differences in opinion among constituents. During the meeting, a number of outstanding issues were resolved. However, some key articles were referred to the ILO for further advice where consensus could not be achieved. The ILO subsequently provided further technical comments where it was appropriate to do so from the perspective of adherence to international labour standards. It is anticipated that the Rules will be adopted by the Union Minister in 2020.

The ILO successfully advocated for ending the discriminatory practice of restricting women from applying for positions as labour attachés in destination countries, which helped to empower women officials within the government to apply. In January 2019, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population lifted the restriction on women

taking up the position. However, no women have yet been selected and gender biases remains difficult to overcome in practice. In discussions with the Ministry, there appears to be a perception that Thailand is a particularly challenging duty station for women because of the large number of cases of severe exploitation. To address this challenge, the ILO invited a very effective female staff member from a Thai NGO working to provide legal assistance in Mae Sot and Chiang Mai to join the training and share her experience.

In 2019, the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) Increasing the Developmental Impact of Labour Migration through Strengthened Governance and Partnership (Twe Let) project organised six migration and development policy consultations at state and regional level. The workshops were organised in collaboration with the Department of Labour and parliamentarians in Myingyan, Pakkoku, Taunggyi, Mandalay, Mawlamyine and Hakha, with the aim of building the capacity of participants on the nexus between migration and development and supporting dialogue on the challenges, opportunities and potential solutions for better leveraging the benefits of migration in their own states and regions. The recommendations generated will be shared at the Technical Working Group meetings for the *National Plan of Action on Labour Migration*, for which IOM is co-secretariat with the Department of Labour.

IOM helped to organise the Myanmar Government's official celebration of International Migrants Day 2019 at the Myanmar International Convention Centre in Nay Pyi Taw. The event was attended by nearly 500 high-level representatives of the Government, UN agencies, civil society and the private sector. In the event's opening speech, the Vice President of

Myanmar, U Myint Swe, said: *"Although labour migration contributes to the economies of both countries of origin and destination, there are still many migrants who do not receive access to social protection benefits. It is important to not only promote safe migration but also to ensure that migrants are treated with the dignity they deserve"*.

Myanmar's labour laws do not currently prohibit sexual harassment. However, an important development in international law was the passing of the new *ILO Violence and Harassment Convention (C190)* at the International Labour Conference in June 2019. The Care Aung Myin Hmu project conducted advocacy with the Myanmar delegates to the conference on developing an inclusive and robust instrument to protect women workers from sexual harassment within Myanmar's garment industry. A delegate from the Confederation of Trade Unions of Myanmar said: *"I think it has affected the decision of the Myanmar Government to vote for both the Convention and Recommendation."* CARE has conducted further advocacy through a series of public campaign events

to support ratification of C190, establishing a legal framework for ending violence and harassment within the workplace in Myanmar.

CARE also succeeded in incorporating gender sensitivity and sexual harassment in the newly adopted *Occupational Safety and Health Law*. This important policy change was achieved by directly advocating with members of parliament, building the capacity of women workers to advocate through the National Tripartite Dialogue Forum and forming coalitions for advocacy with like-minded organisations. As a result, prevention and support for workers experiencing "psychological incidents", and four other recommended changes relating to gender sensitivity and sexual harassment were included in the final articles of the law.

CARE continued to advocate for adoption of the National Occupational Competency Standards (NOCS) it has developed, as well as collaborating with Fair Wear Foundation and the ILO on the development of seven additional standards related to occupational safety and health. Significant challenges remain with the NOCS, including convincing garment factories of the importance of supporting skills standards for the garment sector, political sensitivities among stakeholders about the inclusion of industrial relations content and a possible split in the government mandate for adoption of the standards. Nevertheless, CARE delivered the highest number of test candidates out of all assessment centres in Myanmar and made a major contribution to the overall testing numbers. In 2018-19, there were 1,693 sewing machine operators tested compared with the next highest figure of 857 electricians.

In 2019, the BBC Media Action's Yay Kyi Yar project transitioned from radio to television – with a new discussion programme focused on supporting inclusive social dialogue on decent work and labour migration to influence policy development. Six episodes were produced during the year on: 1) domestic workers' rights in Patheingyi, 2) discrimination in the workplace in Magway, 3) skills development in Mandalay, 4) irregular migration in Yangon, 5) labour unions in Bago, and 6) child labour in Hpa An. The panel discussion format brings together workers, employers, trade unions, civil society and the Government and provides a unique opportunity for the audience to directly ask questions and have their voices heard by decision makers. Although open discussion of politically sensitive issues on television has proven challenging, the show has succeeded in engaging senior officials and representatives to participate. Starting in January 2020, the 11-episode series will be broadcast weekly on Mizzima TV (4.2 million viewers), Mizzima News Facebook (13 million followers), DVB TV (5.7 million viewers), DVB TV Facebook (11.9 million followers) and the Yay Kyi Yar Facebook page (0.8 million followers).

Enhanced knowledge and capacity of stakeholders on decent work, labour migration and anti-trafficking

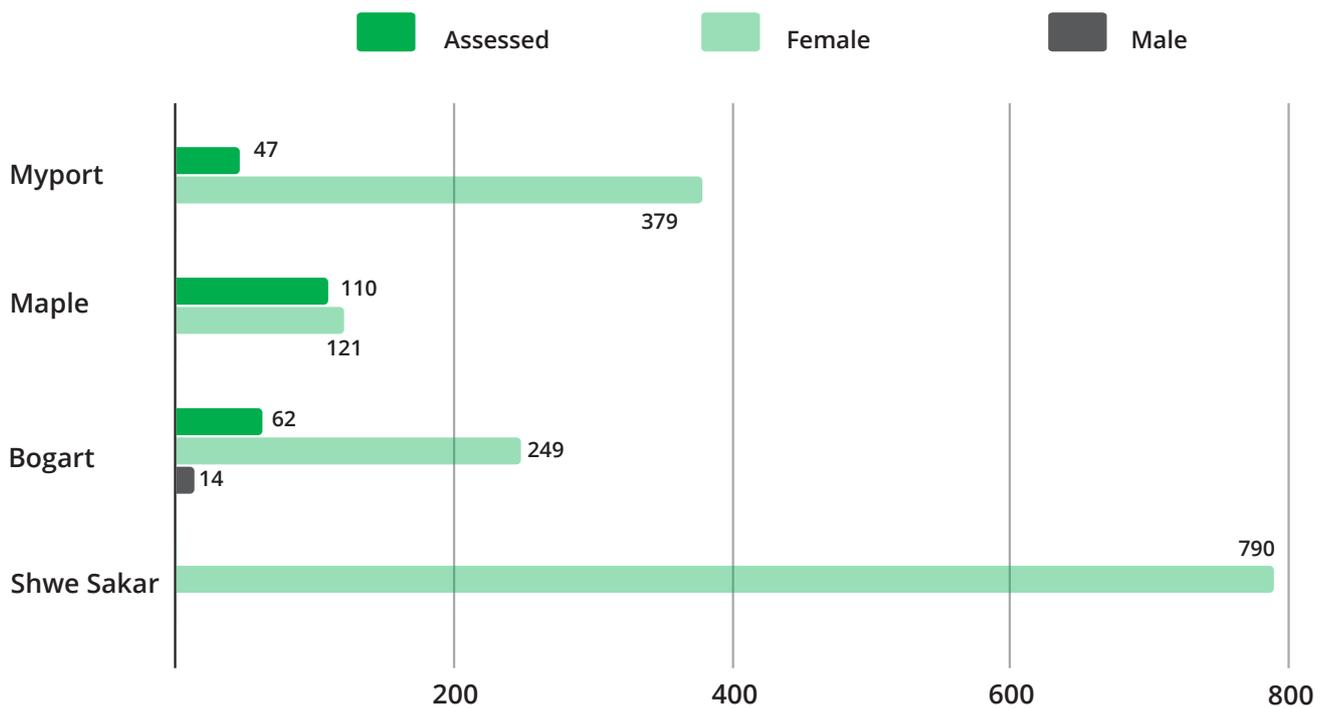


Figure 3.2. Garment workers trained by in-factory training lines and NSSA assessments completed

The garment sector in Myanmar is growing fast and the effects of this rapid expansion are clearly evident in the way factories are managed and workers are hired and trained. Most factories are set up with production targets for all of their operations, particularly for their sewing lines. However, managers and supervisors often do not have the skills to manage their staff effectively and are under enormous pressure to achieve these goals. In response, CARE's Aung Myin Hmu project launched a supervisory skills training programme that helps supervisors better understand their roles and responsibilities, how to motivate their staff and increase performance. The training also provides them with technical skills on optimised sewing methodologies and workplace ergonomics so they can coach their staff.

There is huge demand for these skills within the garment industry and 157 supervisors have been trained to date. The results show promise in improving management practices, reducing turnover and increasing productivity. As one of the training participants explained: *"I have learned to communicate in new ways. In the past, I used to be very rude to junior employees. Now, I have learnt that I should not be rude but instead tell my operators politely what I want them to do. And because I learned the 5Ss, I know how to sort, how to store and how to structure the workspace properly. I have added to my skills and work more systematically because of what I have learned"*.

Given its success in embedding its skills training curriculum in four garment factories that have provided training to over 1,500 workers (see figure 3.2), CARE has developed a how-to manual for establishing in-factory training lines. It will be used by the National Skills Standards Authority, the Accreditation and Certification Committee, Swisscontact and GIZ to develop a generic version for use across all industries in Myanmar. In particular, as the date for mandatory accredited training lines approaches, it is expected that industry demand for in-house sewing machine operator training will rise. Market research is currently being conducted by the project to assess the price points and appetite among factories so that it can provide responsive services.

The BBC Media Action Yay Kyi Yar project continued to conduct training for nine ethnic media outlets across Myanmar to build interest and capacity to report on migration issues in a more informed and balanced manner. Referred to as Open Radio Days, the training includes tailored coaching with partners to produce content on migration in their particular states and regions and organising community discussions with audiences and expert guests from the local area. After the training, the media partners were able to produce high-quality content on migration in their native languages. For example, reporter Sai Kyaw Thein from the Shan Herald Agency for News produced a feature story about a domestic worker in

Chiang Mai, Thailand who built a positive relationship with the family she worked with for over 10 years and was finally able to return to her family in Shan State with the resources to develop her skills further and find a job as a tailor.

BBC Media Action also brought together a broader range of key migration stakeholders – including government, media and civil society – to build their capacity on working with the media and to foster improved cooperation. Three Media and Migration Workshops were held in Yangon, Chin and Kachin States in partnership with migration experts from the ILO. The workshops applied a dynamic approach, including engaging participants with scenarios for which they were asked to respond to questions from media representatives on camera. Most importantly, the workshop brought together a diverse range of stakeholders and broke down barriers – supporting learning on how the other actors work, getting to know each other personally and laying the groundwork for future cooperation.

Responding to the need for a broader understanding of migration experiences for media that extends beyond Myanmar's border, a week-long capacity building activity titled *Reporting on ASEAN Migration* was organised for 12 editors and senior journalists. The workshop began in Yangon and continued in Bangkok, facilitating participation in seminars and discussions with key organisations and migrants at origin and destination. By providing the media in Myanmar with a deeper understanding of migration issues within the ASEAN context, they will be able to play a greater role in holding authorities to account for ineffective policies. The workshop had an immediate impact on the media discourse on migration in Myanmar, with participants publishing 36 media stories in *The Voice Daily*, *7 Days*, *Myanmar Times*, *DVB*, *RFA*, *Dawei Watch*, *MRTV Current Affairs*, *Myanmar Now*, *Hintha Media*, *Myitkyina News Journal* and *Myanmar Radio*. The feedback provided by the media participants clearly demonstrated increased interest in reporting accurately on migration: *"I want to show the lives of migrants and get more attention from the government on the challenges they face"*.

A major goal of the IOM Twe Let project is to build the technical and institutional capacity of its CSO partners – Parami Development Network, Mon Women's Organization and Chin Human Rights Organization. For most of the partners, migration was a very new thematic area of work and they experienced a steep learning curve. Supported by intensive trainings, a participatory approach and iterative training methods, major improvements were achieved in a number of key technical and operational areas. With an eye towards achieving sustainability by the end of the project, four additional capacity building workshops were organised for the partners during 2019: 1) project management, 2) facilitation, 3) communications, and 4) donor reporting.



IOM also established a partnership between the Center for Economic and Social Development (MDRI-CESD), Metta Development Foundation and Australian National University (ANU) to strengthen the evidence base for migration policies through a capacity building approach. An institutional capacity development plan was designed that will lead to the formation of a migration research stream at MDRI-CESD. This will allow them to continue producing high-quality migration research beyond the life of the project. The plan applies a 'learning by doing' approach, including implementation of four research studies. The Head of Anthropology, a professor of demography and a senior lecturer in statistics at ANU will support the research capacity building for the national partners, as well as the design of each study.

The ILO DIILM project delivered several trainings for government and social partners during 2019. Training for the Department of Labour on implementing the official complaints mechanism for migrant workers enabled them to collect and analyse more detailed and useful information on grievances lodged and remedies provided to inform policy development. Figures supplied through this new system show that the complaints mechanism dealt with 691 cases in 2019, the most common of which related to deaths, unpaid wages, occupational injuries and withholding of identification documents. The project also delivered a two-day training for labour attachés to be posted in Thailand, which included establishing networks with the migrants' rights organisation MAP Foundation to develop a support system for addressing the problems faced by Myanmar migrants.

During 2019, the ILO's continuing efforts to build the capacity of the CSO and Labour Organization Network for Migrants included coordination meetings, trainings and implementation of joint activities. Network members are becoming recognised as experts in the migration field within Myanmar and have developed the capacity to implement larger grant-funded projects. To replicate the success of the Network, the ILO began providing training to

CSOs and labour organisations in other states and regions to build similar capacities on safe migration and provision of assistance to resolve labour rights complaints. For example, a training in Myitkyina was conducted for organisations in Kachin and northern Shan States, including workers from banana plantations in Bhamo who are currently resolving a labour dispute with their employer.

The ILO DIILM project published a paper *Migration data for policy development: An appraisal of data and statistics on international labour migration in Myanmar* in English and Myanmar languages to provide an overview of the current official statistics available. The report proposes several additional types of information and statistics that are necessary to strengthen evidence-based policymaking on labour migration. The findings are intended to support the Government in meeting its reporting obligations for six performance indicators of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, as well as collecting data for the union-level Labour Migration Information System managed by the Department of Labour.

To expand the knowledge of key stakeholders on migration issues, the IOM Capitalizing on Human Mobility for Poverty Alleviation and Inclusive Development in Myanmar (CHIME) project completed implementation of a comprehensive communications strategy to disseminate the results of the CHIME study. A total of six CHIME dissemination workshops were held in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Taunggyi, Sittwe, Patheingyi and Yangon, with the Nay Pyi Taw event in particular receiving wide media coverage. In addition to the full study report in English and Myanmar languages, six thematic briefs (agriculture, urbanisation, gender, indebtedness, working conditions and social impact) and four regional briefs (Ayeyarwady, Rakhine, Shan and Dry Zone) were produced and disseminated. To close the loop with the migrants who participated in the CHIME research, Metta Development Foundation held 37 community-based dialogue sessions on the research findings in northern and southern Shan State, involving 1,250 people from 109 villages.

IOM partnered with Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) to promote the thematic findings of the CHIME study through the production of three broadcast quality documentaries. The documentaries bring to life CHIME's research findings – humanising the study for more general interest audiences. They depict the impact of migration in Myanmar through interviews with aspirant migrants and migrant-sending households in the Dry Zone, Shan State and Yangon. So far, the documentaries have received over 426,000 views through DVB and the Miss Migration Facebook pages. Because of the positive feedback received, DVB agreed to air the documentaries free of charge on their TV channel multiples times during August-September 2019. DVB also produced 36 short migration-related videos, including street

interviews/vox pops with migrant workers, interviews with migration experts, short interviews with migrant workers in ethnic areas, interviews with panelists at CHIME workshops and migration-related human-interest stories. These videos were regularly posted on the Miss Migration Facebook page and cross-posted to DVB's 11 million+ followers on Facebook, giving CHIME-related videos a substantial reach.

Since the CHIME report was first launched on International Migrants Day 2018 in Nay Pyi Taw in front of a high-level audience of 500 that included the Vice President of Myanmar, there has been continuous interest in the report from Government officials. The Director General of the Department of Labour regularly refers to the CHIME study and encouraged his staff to attend CHIME events so they could learn more about the migration-development nexus. At the regional level, the Chief Minister of Rakhine State expressed significant interest in the study, requesting that IOM continue to provide updates and implement follow-up activities to increase the developmental impact of labour migration and reduce precarious migration. Representatives of the Shan State Government were particularly interested in addressing the vulnerabilities experienced by migrant households through developing interventions based on the research.

During its inception phase, the ActionAid Safe Migration for Decent Work in the Peri-Urban Areas of Yangon (SECURE) project developed a methodology for an action research study with Dr. Kyoko Kusakabe of the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok. The overall objective of the study is to provide an evidence base for the development of a scheme to meet the childcare needs of migrant workers in Yangon and advocate for improvements to maternity protection in factories. As migrants tend to be viewed explicitly as temporary residents in places of destination, the research seeks to address the knowledge gap on how migrants navigate their work during pregnancy and attend to childcare responsibilities. It also seeks to understand how lack of access to childcare and education services impacts on migrant families, including its potential to contribute to increases in child labour.

The Decent Work and Labour Mobility team worked with LIFT Programme Advisor Dr Elena Shih from the Brown University Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice to publish an influential Op-Ed on Al Jazeera's global website. The article addressed the dramatic expansion of laws focused on increasing the transparency of supply chains in recent years, pointing out that while they require businesses to disclose their efforts to address labour exploitation, they typically have few provisions to ensure compliance or enforcement. It emphasised the critical deficiency of supply chain approaches in highlighting corporate intentions while obscuring the importance of building worker power to prevent

abuses. The article concludes that establishing more equitable channels of negotiation between workers and employers - including the global brands who buy from them - would grant a voice to workers to define the most pressing problems and the most appropriate solutions for improving their situations.

Increased access to information, training and support services for women and men migrants and other vulnerable workers

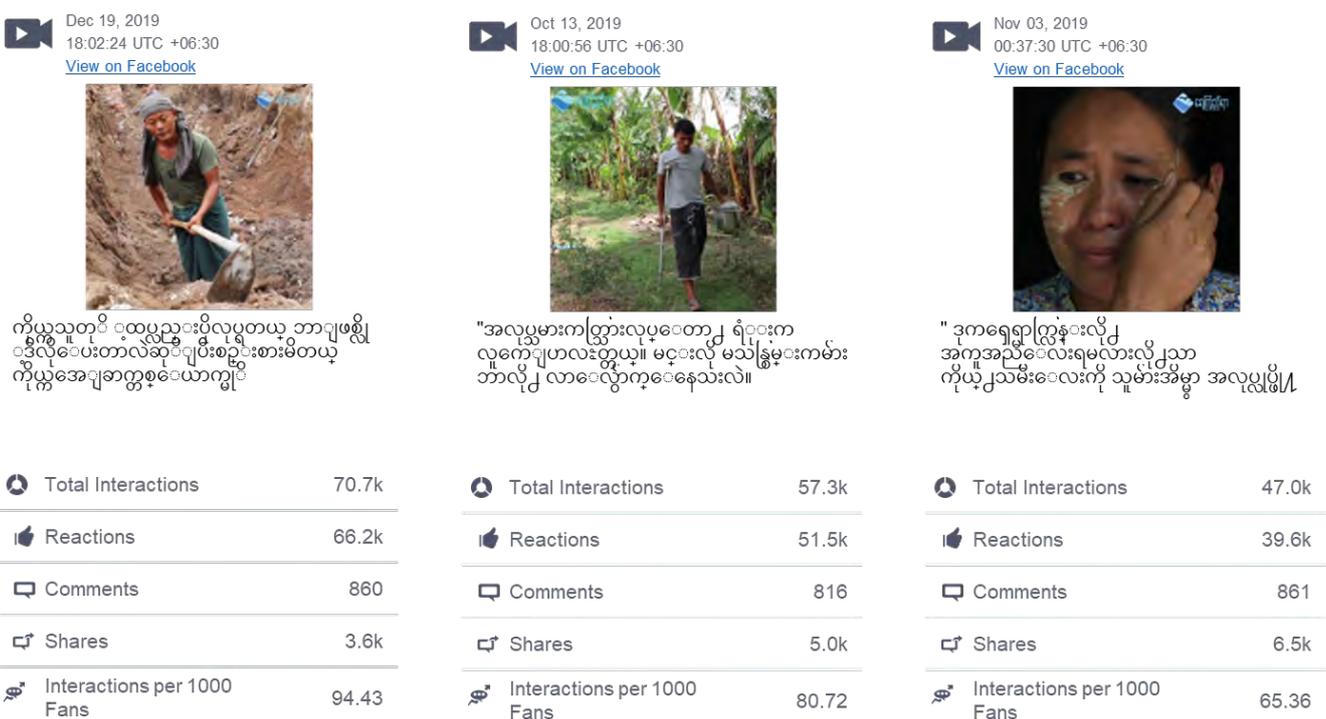
To provide information on safe migration and financial management issues to migrant households, the BBC Media Action Yay Kyi Yar project broadcast 10 episodes of the Yay Kyi Yar radio show during 2019. The programme uses an infotainment mix of factual information, expert interviews, audience discussion and personal stories to ensure high levels of engagement. The episodes were broadcast on MRTV Myanmar Radio and MAP Radio in Thailand, with an estimated reach of 3.2 million total listeners and 1.8 million regular listeners. BBC Media Action carried out qualitative and quantitative research studies to evaluate the impact of the Yay Kyi Yar radio programme. A positive finding was that regular listeners took considerable action to improve financial management because the tips provided spoke directly to their key concerns around money and personal finances.

The popularity of the Yay Kyi Yar Facebook page continued to grow rapidly during the year, more than doubling its followers to reach 756,698 people

in more than 10 countries. Digital content covered a wide variety of decent work and labour migration concerns, including information about labour rights in Japan and Singapore, safe migration tips, domestic workers' rights, pay discrimination based upon gender, minimum wage regulations, contact information for assistance in Thailand and Malaysia, social security entitlements and necessary information in an employment contract. Role modelling was also used as an effective tool to motivate audiences, showcasing inspiring success stories of migrants and of returnees who have started their own businesses. These stories received a large amount of engagement and positive feedback from audiences. On average, the Yay Kyi Yar Facebook posts reached over 198,000 viewers per day, with the most popular post during the period receiving over 70,000 interactions (see figure 3.3).

One indication of the strong rapport that the Yay Kyi Yar Facebook page has built with its online audience is that many of them approach the page directly seeking essential information. Over 12,000 direct questions were received and answered through Facebook Messenger. Examples of questions asked were: how to apply for jobs, visas and passports; information about migrating for work to Thailand; how to choose a licensed and reputable recruitment agency; and how to get assistance in Thailand when faced with exploitation. BBC Media Action responds to these questions by linking the audience with migration experts and service providers in Thailand and Myanmar, providing migrants with a critical link to information. The Yay Kyi Yar team also used Facebook Live to increase audience interaction, streaming 10 episodes focused on labour rights and decent work

Figure 3.3 Top three posts on BBC MediaAction's Yay Kyi Yar Facebook page



issues. The format for the broadcasts is a studio-based discussion with expert guests responding to questions from the audience through telephone calls and Facebook comments. To date, the videos have received 14.7 million audience views.

To improve the prospects of obtaining decent work for women migrants in Yangon, the CARE Aung Myin Hmu project provided skills training for the garment sector through its training centre in North Dagon and factory-based training lines. During 2019, 2,460 workers were trained as sewing machine operators, sewing machine mechanics, cutting room operators and quality controllers through the project's direct training lines and those it technically supported. Of the graduates who completed the National Skills Standards Authority assessment, 95 per cent passed and received their skills certification.

After upgrading the project's MEAL system during the year, CARE was able to obtain robust data demonstrating the practical value of its training model. In the latest round of quasi-experimental surveys for sewing machine operators, the results show that 94 per cent of trainees were able to obtain work and were often better paid and more productive than other workers in the industry. More than three-quarters of trainees (78 per cent) earned higher salaries than those who had not participated in the training, with 69 per cent receiving a salary increase after four months. Aung Myin Hmu trainees were also more productive than the control group; achieving their output targets 77 per cent of the time in comparison to 40 per cent for the group not participating in the training.

In 2019, a new memorandum of understanding was signed with the Department of Labour for the use of their training facilities that will allow CARE to proceed with its sustainability plans and work towards a fee-for-service model for its training services. The project is drafting a business plan and the Department of Labour has announced publicly that the training centre will start to charge for training in the future. This represents very positive progress towards achieving financial sustainability of the training model after LIFT's funding ends in June 2021.

Working in close cooperation with the skills training component of the CARE project, Thone Pan Hla Association implemented a wide range of peer-directed services for migrant women in Hlaing Thar Yar and Shwe Pyi Thar Townships. More than 7,500 women factory workers participated in Sunday Café events to improve their knowledge and build supportive peer networks. The reach of this information was amplified through 'Sunday blast messages' via Facebook and SMS to a mailing list of more than 85,548 migrant workers. In addition, 143 migrant women received emergency support through the Women in Crisis programme for problems of homelessness, loss of employment, sexual violence and human trafficking.

In addition to raising awareness, CARE worked to develop a referral pathway for gender-based violence cases in partnership with Legal Clinic Myanmar. Referral workshops were held with 37 duty bearers from from Hlaing Thar Yar Township Court, the Department of Social Welfare and CSOs. Legal Clinic Myanmar also delivered paralegal training to 32 participants to support a gender-based violence referral network in communities. These trainings have begun to produce results as Legal Clinic Myanmar received 701 calls related to gender-based violence through its 24-hour hotline service. In addition, mediation services were provided for 162 cases and formal litigation assistance for 26 cases involving physical, domestic or sexual violence and/or mental abuse.

To help fill the gap in access to safe migration information and services, the ILO DIILM project supported the establishment of six Migrant Information Centres during May-June 2019. The Centres are managed by civil society and labour organisations, providing a migrant-friendly entry point into the service system. They have been set up in key areas of origin, transit and destination in Tachileik, Kawthaung, North Dagon, Shwe Pyi Thar, Bago and Myawaddy. In just six months, the Migrant Information Centres served over 12,000 migrants, delivering safe migration information, training and legal assistance in cases of exploitation or workplace injuries. An additional 40,000 beneficiaries received safe migration information delivered through IEC materials and social media.

The ILO achieved a significant breakthrough in increasing access to justice for migrant workers through the the Migrant Information Centres. A total of 1,857 migrants (34 per cent women) reported complaints to the centres, demonstrating the high-level of trust migrants have for the organisations managing them. In particular, the Confederation of Trade Unions Myanmar (CTUM) set up a Migrant Information Centre that is strategically located to receive complaints near the Pinlon Centre, where migrants are required to complete pre-departure procedures. CTUM developed a robust database for management of these cases and has begun using the data for advocacy with members of parliament (see table 3.5). In total, CTUM and Samaritan's Purse were able to obtain awards of MMK 659 million (USD 470,571) for redress of migrants' grievances, primarily through mediation of recruitment-related complaints.

Table 3.5 Migrant complaint cases resolved by the Confederation of Trade Unions Myanmar

| Subject of complaint | Men | Women | Total | Cases |
|--|------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| Paid recruitment fees but never deployed | 596 | 258 | 854 | 59 |
| Breach of employment contract | 238 | 107 | 345 | 36 |
| Received fake visa | 20 | 19 | 39 | 1 |
| Contract substitution | 21 | 9 | 30 | 12 |
| Failed medical exam at destination | 12 | 2 | 14 | 7 |
| Arrested | 8 | 0 | 8 | 3 |
| Withholding identification documents | 6 | 0 | 6 | 5 |
| Workplace accidents (deaths) | 3 | 2 | 5 | 5 |
| Workplace accidents (injuries) | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Missing | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Car accidents | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 907 | 399 | 1,306 | 132 |

With the ILO's support, a comprehensive skills training curriculum for domestic workers was developed by Three Good Spoons, including safe food handling, kitchen hygiene, cookery, kitchen management, nutrition, money and time management, safe migration and personal security. The skills training programme enables greater recognition of domestic workers as skilled workers and provides them with certification. A total of 40 women domestic workers completed the five-week skills training programme. To support the graduates in finding decent work after the training, discussions were organised with prospective employers regarding the details of the conditions of work they offer, including hours, leave, wages and benefits.

The IOM Twe Let project continued implementation of community outreach in Chin, Shan, the South-East and the Dry Zone through its ethnic CSO partners. The scale of the services delivered in these areas speaks to the broad-based success of this model in reaching aspirant migrants and their family members in Myanmar. The project has delivered training on pre-migration outreach, the importance of saving remittances, income generating activities and skills development to 75,818 beneficiaries in 789 villages. Quantitative and qualitative data collected through outcome surveys, tracking surveys, in-depth interviews and focus groups demonstrated the positive outcomes of these training services for migrants and their family members. To provide post-training support, Migrant Advisory Centres have also been opened in Hakha, Taungyyi and Mawlamyine, assisting migrants with access to regular migration channels and connecting them to relevant government services.

The IOM Migration as a Livelihood Diversification Strategy (MILDAS) project in the Ayeyarwady Delta

Region delivered trainings on the benefits of migration to nearly 8,000 aspirant migrants and their family members in partnership with local CSOs in 200 villages in Bogale, Mawlamyinegyun and Laputta Townships. The Delta is the largest area of origin for internal migration in Myanmar. The training for migrants and their family members supports more informed decisions about migration and how they can best position migration within the context of their broader livelihood strategies to increase its long-term benefits.

In May 2019, IOM commissioned a consultant with expertise in low-literacy communications and training methods to conduct focus group discussions with CSO staff and 47 of the training beneficiaries. The training curriculum, methodology and materials were adapted as a result. A greater emphasis is now placed on active role-play, use of songs and games and more audio-visual content as learning tools. Post-training evaluations conducted during the year showed very positive results, with nearly all respondents demonstrating a better understanding of the migration process and financial management techniques.

The Miss Migration (Mel Shwet Pyaung) chatbot and Facebook page was launched by IOM in May 2018. They were developed in response to repeated requests from trainers to make up-to-date and accurate migration information available online so that people who were seeking migration information could access it easily. Since its launch, the Miss Migration chatbot and Facebook page have seen substantial growth in reach. During 2019, The Miss Migration chatbot held 4,224 unique conversations with users and the Miss Migration Facebook page now has over 19,000 followers.

In areas without sufficiently developed financial services in the Ayeyarwady Region, IOM established 41 village-based revolving funds in partnership with village leaders and local CSOs. The loans fill a gap in access to credit as poor communities are typically unable to take out loans from a commercial bank and the interest charged by money lenders can be up to 10 per cent per month. A maximum loan amount of MMK 200,000 (USD 130) is disbursed by the funds, requiring repayment of the principal plus 2 per cent interest. The loans are used for transportation costs, basic living expenses, health services and other migration-related expenses. Between March and December 2019, USD 41,889 worth of migration loans were disbursed to 756 aspirant migrants and members of migrant-sending households with no default in repayments to date.

Eden's Rescue Myanmar Migrant Women and Girls who have been Trafficked for the Purposes of Sexual Exploitation or Forced Marriage project provided direct assistance and shelter services to trafficked women with a focus on trauma-focused cognitive behavioural therapy. Through outreach in red-light districts, trafficking hubs and vulnerable communities, the project identified 17 survivors of trafficking. Together with referrals received from the Department of Social Welfare, the Anti-Trafficking Task Force and NGOs, a total of 44 women and girls were provided with shelter services to support them in leaving exploitative conditions.

To ensure a sustainable exit from trafficking situations, Eden provides women and girls with holistic rehabilitation services, including trauma counselling, creative therapies, vocational training and employment services. During the year, Eden provided vocational training to 44 women and girls in jewelry-making, hair dressing, baking, computer skills, sales and marketing and sewing. A new vocational training centre was opened in Yangon in June 2019 to support the growing demand for skills training services among Eden's beneficiaries. Tracing surveys revealed that the training has been effective in placing trafficking survivors in new forms of work, with 25 individuals employed 6 months after completing training.

A highlight in 2019 was a visit to Eden's shelter in Yangon by State Counselor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who toured the facilities and met with the project staff and beneficiaries. Eden also opened its first satellite shelter site in Lashio – part of a planned expansion of services to northern and eastern Shan State. The Lashio shelter became fully operational in May 2019 and provided shelter services to six trafficking survivors during its first year of operation. The expansion of Eden's shelter services to Tachileik will be completed in 2020.

Under the Mercy Corps Linking Labutta to Markets project, Swisscontact continued to support the

upskilling of landless youth bringing the total number of students that have completed skills training to 1,681 since the beginning of the project. Of these graduates, 79 per cent are currently employed. A key element of the approach is to directly involve the private sector in the skills training process, with 126 employers engaged by the end of 2019. To ensure sustainability, continued efforts were made to strengthen capacities of two local CSO partners and the Government's vocational training school in Labutta. Relationships have been established between these partners and Yangon-based industries to support employment for the trainees after graduating.

Also working in the Delta Region, the World Vision Growing Livelihoods in Bogale project began scaling up its successful approach to vocational training and job creation to reach a further 60 villages, with 368 youth from landless households completing training to date. The project's close engagement with the private sector has been key in helping beneficiaries to find jobs, working with transportation companies, beauty salons, garment factories, elder care facilities, pharmacies and bakeries to place trainees. As a result, 82 per cent of beneficiaries have obtained relevant employment after completing training.

LOOKING AHEAD

The Decent Work and Labour Mobility Programme expanded considerably during 2019. Following a call for proposals, three new projects were contracted in Kachin and northern Shan States, which have completed their inception phases and will begin implementation during 2020. Two of the projects focus on technical and vocational education and training and will be implemented by ADRA and World Vision, while a third project on safe migration and anti-trafficking will be carried out by IOM. The projects are expected to significantly expand decent work opportunities for internally displaced people and host communities in conflict-affected areas.

Supplementing LIFT's existing interventions in peri-urban areas, three new projects were contracted in 2019 and began their inception phases. As part of a three-year multi-disciplinary programme, People in Need, ActionAid and Women's Organization Network will support internal migrants 'stepping out' of agriculture to obtain safe and rewarding employment within the industrial and service sectors in Yangon.

The Decent Work and Labour Mobility Programme also completed scoping research to inform the development of LIFT programmes in Chin State and the South-East of Myanmar during the year. Three additional projects addressing safe migration, return and reintegration of deported migrants and market-oriented vocational training will be contracted in 2020.

This extended portfolio will substantially broaden LIFT's engagement with establishing conditions of decent work within Myanmar's labour market, providing additional employment opportunities for women, ethnic minorities, internally displaced people and people with disabilities. At the same time, it will continue to build upon LIFT's highly effective programming to support internal and international migrants as some of the country's most vulnerable populations of workers.

3.5 CONFLICT-AFFECTED AREAS

LIFT has intensified its focus on the most vulnerable in the ethnic/border states and conflict-affected areas in its 2019-2023 phase to:

- » Support more sustainable and robust approaches to poverty and hunger reduction for communities in protracted crises and marginal areas
- » Bring internally displaced persons and returnees into its development programmes by supporting the humanitarian development transition
- » Contribute to improved nutritional outcomes
- » Help displaced people secure jobs and income
- » Prevent exploitation, providing protection services to victims of trafficking and building cohesion with host communities

In line with this focus, in 2019, LIFT set up new programmes in conflict-affected areas, specifically in Kachin State, northern Shan State and in the South-East (Mon, Kayin and Kayah States and Taninthary Region).

Over time, LIFT has increasingly funded initiatives in conflict-affected areas of Myanmar, particularly through initiatives in Rakhine State and Upland areas addressing issues such as migration, nutrition, livelihoods and support for civil society. This work generated some capacity and awareness of how development programmes needed to operate differently in conflict-affected areas. But considerable work was still needed to ensure that conflict-sensitivity principles were adopted across LIFT, both in setting strategic direction and during implementation as programming in conflict-affected areas increased. During the first half of 2019, LIFT finalised the *Conflict Sensitivity Strategy and Action Plan* and updated the *Conflict Sensitivity Principles*, with the support of an external specialist consultant). The *LIFT Conflict Framework*⁴⁴ outlines an approach to conflict sensitivity and conflict analysis that strengthens and complements existing LIFT practices.

In collaboration with the Access to Health Fund, LIFT engaged with RAFT, a specialised organisation

that provides technical assistance to LIFT's Fund Management Office (FMO) and implementing partners (IP) on conflict-sensitive programming. During 2019, RAFT provided training sessions on conflict sensitivity to LIFT FMO, and IPs in Rakhine, Kachin and northern Shan. RAFT's approach focuses on working with IPs to help them develop skills and systems to effectively monitor the context, their interaction with it, and the effectiveness of any options they develop to maximise their positive impact and avoid doing harm.

Ethnic areas consistently demonstrate lower levels of development across a range of indicators. LIFT's programme supports the delivery of basic services and implements confidence-building activities in these areas.

Internal displacement

Myanmar faces multiple ongoing conflicts between the Myanmar military and ethnic armed groups, marked by widespread violations of international humanitarian and human rights laws causing substantial humanitarian needs. More than 279,000 people, displaced by conflict, currently live in camps in Kachin, Shan, Rakhine, Chin, and Kayin States, with limited access to basic services. Restricted humanitarian access to several areas hampers the ability of international aid organisations to provide crucial assistance to people in need. Recurrent natural disasters also increase the vulnerability of residents in disaster-prone areas.

In Myanmar, about 42,000 people were newly displaced in 2018 due to conflict and violence, a decrease from about 57,000 new displacements reported in 2017. However, the rate of new displacements increased in Kachin State and northern Shan State in 2018, where as many as 36,000 people were newly displaced – 21,000 more than was recorded in these regions in 2017. Some of these displacements were due to fighting between ethnic armed groups in northern Shan, where nearly 22,000 people were displaced amid competition for territorial control. Many locations such as Namtu Township in northern Shan State experienced high levels of repeated displacements. In Kachin, fighting between the Kachin Independence Organization/Kachin Independence Army (KIO/KIA) and the Myanmar army, which was most intense in April and May 2018, triggered the displacement of more than 14,000 people. Between October and December 2018, clashes between the Arakan Army and the Myanmar army intensified in Chin and Rakhine States. Many displacements were temporary, with people returning home as soon as fighting ceased. Overall, more than 234,000 people were still in protracted displacement in camps and informal sites across Kachin, northern Shan and Rakhine in December 2018.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ <https://www.lift-fund.org/lift-conflict-framework>

⁴⁵ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), MYANMAR Figure Analysis – Displacement Related to Conflict and Violence, December 2018

During the first half of 2019, about 81,000 new displacements were recorded, 42,000 by conflict and 39,000 by disasters.⁴⁶

Myanmar is exposed and vulnerable to a wide range of natural hazards that trigger displacement. Chief among them are regular, widespread flooding and localised landslides. Monsoon floods triggered about 298,000 new displacements in 2018. The risk of displacement due to natural hazards is amplified by high levels of socio-economic vulnerability and a lack of institutional capacity to cope.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)'s estimate of the total number of IDPs in Myanmar was produced using various data sources covering different states and regions of the country: 131,000 in Rakhine, 97,000 in Kachin, 50,000 in Kayin, 40,000 in Tanintharyi, 27,000 in Kayah, 22,000 in Bago, 18,000 in Mon, 15,000 in Shan and 1,300 in Chin. In total, more than 401,000.

Kachin State and northern Shan State

CONTEXT

In June 2018, the Myanmar government announced plans to close IDP camps across the country, and in December 2018 the Myanmar military proclaimed a unilateral ceasefire through to 30 April 2019 covering Kachin State and northern Shan State. The ceasefire declaration included a pledge to help people displaced by war to return to their home villages. The ceasefire was extended to 30 June 2019. Nevertheless, clashes between the Tatmadaw and some ethnic armed groups (EAOs) and clashes between different EAOs continued, especially in northern Shan State, resulting in new population displacement. As of February 2020, there were 172 sites for internally displaced people in Kachin and northern Shan where almost 107,109 internally-displaced people are living. Many of the displaced (about 40 per cent in Kachin State) were in areas outside of government control with limited humanitarian access.⁴⁷ Many experienced hardships due to displacements compounded by harsh weather in the hilly regions.

Although northern Shan State shares a number of challenges that are found in other parts of Myanmar, several unique dynamics exist and the high level of complexity merits consideration of the area separately. There is limited information available that explains the context of northern Shan State. Reports that are available often bundle Kachin and northern Shan State together and the analysis tends to focus on Kachin.

Northern Shan is characterised by its high level of ethnic diversity that includes Shan, Ta'ang, Bamar, Kachin, Chinese, Lahu, Lisu and Wa ethnic groups. Another feature is the high number of ethnic armed organisations (EAOs) operating within the area. The volatile and complex conflict dynamics in northern Shan, combined with the numerous actors and overlapping nature of their claims to territory, have all played a significant role in the re-escalation of conflict that started in the aftermath of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) signed in 2015. Conflict dynamics in northern Shan are not limited to the relationship between the EAOs and the Tatmadaw, since conflict between EAOs and smaller, mainly Tatmadaw-allied militias, as well as conflict between EAOs themselves, take place concurrently. The conflict is marked by sporadic and dispersed clashes, making it difficult to predict where and when future fighting will take place. Meanwhile, social tensions in communities increase and become an integrated factor of the conflict. These societal tensions are largely seen as a spillover effect of armed conflict between the different EAOs and are thus seen as influencing, rather than originating, in community-level relationships. These spillover effects result from human rights abuses carried out by EAOs against members of other ethnic communities as well as people's suffering due to the armed conflict.

Northern Shan State sees a different displacement pattern than elsewhere in Myanmar. Compared to Kachin State the number of internally displaced people is relatively low (9,800 compared to approximately 100,000). However, this number is somewhat misleading as most of the displacement is dynamic (i.e. multiple short-duration displacements) rather than static. This creates different challenges for those seeking to accurately account for the needs of conflict-affected populations or develop strategies to support host communities who are often directly responsible for the emergency response multiple times a year.

The conflict in Kachin and northern Shan is marked by decades of widespread and systematic human rights violations. The UN Human Rights Council-mandated Independent Fact Finding Mission (IFFM) report from September 2018 concluded there were patterns of crimes against humanity and war crimes perpetrated by the Tatmadaw and EAOs.

The patterns of abuse in armed conflict are exacerbated by an environment of exploitation through land seizures and exploitation of natural resources. In Kachin State, considerable amounts of land owned by IDPs along the border with China have been appropriated for banana plantations and other cash crops.⁴⁸ In northern Shan, Myanmar's military

⁴⁶ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), Myanmar Figure Analysis

⁴⁷ OCHA, Kachin NNS Snapshot June 2018

⁴⁸ Durable Peace Programme, Displaced and dispossessed: conflict affected communities and their land of origin in Kachin State, Myanmar, May 2018.

has appropriated land beside main roads for many years. Land issues are further complicated by the legal system that makes redress and compensation extremely difficult.

The lack of livelihood opportunities is a major challenge for internally displaced people in camps and for host communities in government- and non-government-controlled areas. Several communities rely solely on humanitarian and development aid to survive. This perpetuates a lack of food security and increased protection risks as internally displaced people take greater risks seeking work and access to food markets. Livelihood challenges are a significant problem in Kachin State and are closely related to many other social problems. These challenges can be a result of unemployment, underemployment, displacement or the struggle to earn sufficient income from farming or other traditional livelihoods. For many communities in Kachin State whose livelihoods are based on agriculture, livestock feeding, seasonal labour and charcoal selling, etc., armed conflict has meant reduced access to their farmlands and loss of their main sources of livelihoods.⁴⁹

Kachin ranked fourth among all states in a vulnerability index developed following a countrywide review of census data by the Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU) and the Humanitarian Assistance and Resilience Program (HARP) in June 2018. An estimated 988,300 persons, or 60 per cent of the population in Kachin State, had some form of vulnerability in relation to housing materials, education/educational attainment, safe sanitation, drinking water, child dependency, availability of identification cards and/or direct exposure to conflict during the period analysed. Seven of 18 townships in Kachin State (39 per cent) fell in the top 20 per cent of townships in Myanmar with the highest maternal mortality rates. The HIV prevalence was also high. The disability prevalence rate in Kachin State was approximately 4 per cent (although not all populations in Kachin were enumerated in the census, and information collection on persons with disability was limited).⁵⁰

While many parts of Kachin State fare comparatively well in terms of development indicators, according to the *Myanmar Living Conditions Survey*, Kachin State is the second from worst state or region in terms of labour force participation/employment rates as a share of population and has the worst unemployment rates of all of Myanmar's states and regions. The most viable way to earn money for many

people is either through illegal businesses including opium cultivation and narcotics trafficking, or through working in mines or trading areas where drug use is rampant.⁵¹ According to a recent assessment by the Center for Diversity and National Harmony (CDNH), 40 per cent of the population in northern Shan State is involved in agriculture for their livelihoods. Patterns similar to Kachin are observed in terms of engagement in illegal businesses and mining. Many people are also leaving because of the lack of economic opportunities, mainly migrating to China and Thailand.⁵²

High levels of chronic undernutrition in Myanmar appear to be substantially worse in remote and conflict-affected areas of Kachin and northern Shan. Recent estimates suggest that stunting may be in the range of 50 per cent of all children in the region with micronutrient deficiencies such as anaemia even higher.⁵³ This represents not just an ongoing health crisis but also a major obstacle to the achievement of long-term sustainable livelihoods for both IDPs and their host communities. Tackling this challenge requires sustained coordination across humanitarian, development and government actors – ensuring that camp-based populations continue to receive transfers (such as nutritional and micronutrient commodities) and access to services around the First 1,000 Days approach, and that host and conflict-affected communities equally have access to integrated systems that support improving infant and young child feeding practices (IYCF).⁵⁴

The situation in the north and north-east of Myanmar presents both serious challenges and potential opportunities. In Kachin State, where more than 97,000 internally displaced people have been in camps since 2011, there has been limited new armed conflict or displacement since August 2018, potentially providing opportunities for increased dialogue around durable solutions. But significant obstacles remain.

A lack of sustained access to livelihood opportunities, compounded by insecurity and the presence of landmines and other explosive remnants of war, continues to compromise efforts for transition out of displacement and encourage negative coping mechanisms or risky behaviours.

Complex housing, land and property rights also pose serious challenges to the attainment of durable solutions to displacement. While the situation in Kachin State is therefore not yet conducive to the

⁴⁹ Exploring complexities: A Systemic Analysis of Social Cohesion in Kachin State, RAFT, November 2018

⁵⁰ Humanitarian needs overview, humanitarian programme cycle 2020, Dec 2019, OCHA

⁵¹ Exploring complexities: A Systemic Analysis of Social Cohesion in Kachin State, RAFT, November 2018

⁵² RAFT Conflict assessment of NNS-Draft, 2019

⁵³ LIFT, 2016.

⁵⁴ MIMU/HARP, 2018

realisation of large-scale solutions, small-scale solutions to displacement have emerged for a few thousand internally displaced people in recent years.

The Government is looking into the realisation of durable solutions, as part of its recently adopted *National Strategy on Resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and Closure of IDP Camps*. The humanitarian community is engaging with the Government and local actors to identify possible areas of cooperation to promote the realisation of solutions to displacement that are voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable, in line with international standards.

Starting from 2018, several small-scale initiatives of return and resettlement have taken place with different outcomes. The Joint Strategic team carried out an assessment in June 2019 to understand the situation of internally-displaced people returning to their home villages in Kachin State. They found that decreased humanitarian aid, social deterioration and other abnormal social behaviours had pushed some internally displaced people to find their own way to return home, although conditions for a safe and dignified return were not being met. The government's policy on camp closures and factors pulling people to return also led to premature returns of people who were displaced.

Land is central to humanitarian, development and peace challenges in Kachin State. According to a study carried out by the Durable Peace Programme in May 2018, many displaced people in Kachin claim their land of origin has been appropriated by armed actors for the extraction of natural resources, small-scale and large-scale agriculture, civilian housing or other purposes. As indicated in the joint UNDP/ UNHCR *Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Baseline Assessment* in Kachin State released in 2019, the land law reform of 2012 had the combined effect of undermining existing housing, land and property rights of most internally displaced people, while simultaneously preventing the registration of de facto land rights while in displacement. Conflict and insecurity prevented IDPs from returning to their land and allowed others to make claims, or otherwise use it illegally. In many cases, the physical location of displaced people also prevented them from being informed of these developments. The introduction in October 2018 of amendments to the Vacant, Fallow and Virgin Land Law is likely to exacerbate the situation, with a risk that those whose land of origin was not registered by the March 2019 deadline will be considered trespassers. High levels of deforestation have also generated significant environmental risks. Kachin is a hotspot for illegal logging with significant illegal transport of timber, fuelwood and charcoal to neighbouring countries.

Table 3.6: LIFT-funded projects in Kachin and northern Shan State

| Implementing partner | Project Name | Main activities | Duration | Geographic coverage |
|--|--|---------------------------|---------------------|--|
| ADRA Myanmar | Vocational Education to Support IDPs and Host Communities (VESI) in Kachin and Northern Shan State - Sustainably Enhancing Decent Work Opportunities and Bridging the Gap between Youth from IDP and Vulnerable Host Communities | TVET, decent Work | Jul 2019 – Jun 2022 | Northern Shan State and Kachin |
| HPA-Health Poverty Action | Improve nutrition status of the vulnerable population in conflict affected Kachin and Northern Shan | Nutrition | Jan 2020- Dec 2022 | Northern Shan State and Kachin |
| International Organisation for Migration (IOM) | Supporting Conflict-Affected Women and Youth with Nutrition and Employment (SAFEWAY NET) | Migration and decent work | Jul 2019 – Jun 2022 | Kachin State - Bhamo, Mansi, Momauk, Myitkyina and Waingmaw Townships, northern Shan State - Hopong, Kunlong, Kutkai, Manton, Mongmit, Muse, Namhsan, Namkhan, Namtu and Tangyan Townships |
| Karuna Mission Social Solidarity (KMSS) | Supporting Conflict-Affected Women and Youth with Nutrition and Employment (SAFEWAY NET) | Nutrition | Jul 2019 – Jun 2022 | Kachin State - Myitkyina, Waingmaw, Moegaung, Hpakant, Bhamo, Mansi, and Momauk Townships, Northern Shan State - Hsenwi, Kutkhai, and Muse Townships |

| Implementing partner | Project Name | Main activities | Duration | Geographic coverage |
|----------------------------|--|---|---------------------|--|
| Save the Children | Building Resilience In Conflict affected areas of Northern Shan States (BRICKS) | Nutrition, social protection | Jul 2019 – Jun 2022 | Northern Shan State - Kutkai, Namkham, Kyaukme and Namtu Townships, Kachin State - Mansi, and Momauk Townships |
| Shalom Nyein Foundation | Supporting Nutrition and Livelihoods through SGH in Kachin State, Myanmar | Nutrition, Livelihood supporting access to decent work opportunities for IDPs, Self Help groups | Jan 2020- Dec 2021 | Kachin State |
| Swissaid, Metta, GRET | Upland Township Fund (UTF) for Civil Society | Small grants for CSOs-livelihood | Jan 2019- Jun 2021 | Chin, Kachin, Shan and Kayah States (16 townships) |
| World Concern | Improving the nutrition outcomes of conflict-affected people in Kachin State | Nutrition, nutrition sensitive agriculture | Jan 2020- Dec 2022 | Kachin State |
| World Vision International | SHE - Myanmar Supporting Inclusive and Transformative Livelihoods for IDP and Host Communities in Kachin | TVET and decent work | Jul 2019 – Jun 2022 | Kachin State, Chipwe, Bahmo, Mansi, and Momauk Townships |

HIGHLIGHTS

Kachin and northern Shan State programme development

The Kachin and northern Shan State programme was developed through a series of calls for proposals issued at different stages over 2019. The programme responds to the LIFT Strategy 2019-23 and the associated strategic shifts including: increased focus on inclusion and social cohesion; more concerted efforts on gender equality and women's empowerment; increased geographical focus on the ethnic/border states and conflict-affected areas; focus on working with internally displaced people and returnees; and increased work with government at different levels on targeted policies and policy reforms.

The programme in Kachin and northern Shan focuses on reducing poverty and vulnerability of internally displaced people and host communities affected by conflict through improved nutrition, enhanced skills and access to productive assets (including land) as well as to financial services that support increased livelihood options and future human productivity. An additional component on nutrition-sensitive agriculture will be finalised during early 2020.

During the first half of 2019, LIFT assessed proposals received from the first call for proposals launched in late-2018 and selected five projects.

1) Save the Children: BRICKS – Building Resilience In Conflict-affected Areas of Kachin and Shan States

The project delivers a multi-sectoral and integrated intervention in nutrition, livelihoods and child protection with a focus on youth and adolescent boys and girls, pregnant and breastfeeding women and children 0-23 months of age, living in camps for the internally-displaced, host communities and conflict-affected villages in northern Shan State (5,600 pregnant and breastfeeding women; 3,360 children 0-23 months, and 1,500 youth and adolescent girls).

2) Karuna Mission Social Solidarity (KMSS): SAFEWAY NET - Supporting Conflict-Affected Women and Youth with Nutrition and Employment

The project is designed as a humanitarian/development nexus and supports nutrition and food security targeting around 4,600 beneficiaries (internally displaced people and host communities). The interventions focus on providing resources and support for nutrition and food security improvement.

3) International Organization for Migration (IOM): SAFE - Strengthening the Resilience of Conflict-Affected Communities in Kachin and northern Shan States through Increased Safe and Rewarding Migration

The SAFE project ensures that aspiring migrants have adequate knowledge and awareness to make informed decisions about migration. Community-based support mechanisms are developed to assist migrants before they migrate and to help them recover and reintegrate into their communities after experiencing human trafficking or failed migration. The project also broadens stakeholder support for migrants by engaging CSOs and local authorities in service delivery.

4) World Vision International: SHE - Myanmar Supporting Inclusive and Transformative Livelihoods for IDP and Host Communities in Kachin

The SHE project targets youth, women and people with disabilities, providing them with: market-oriented technical and vocational education and training, skills certification and job matching to link them with employment; enterprise development training and access to finance to support income-generating activities; workplace audits and employer training to eliminate discrimination and improve working conditions; and support of women's networks and village development committees to increase gender equality and inclusion of people with disabilities.

5) ADRA Myanmar: Vocational Education to Support IDPs and Host Communities (VESI) in Kachin and Northern Shan State - Sustainably Enhancing Decent Work Opportunities and Bridging the Gap between Youth from IDP and Vulnerable Host Communities

The project expands the livelihood opportunities for internally displaced people and host communities by delivering market-driven vocational training and job matching services through building the capacity of Government Technical High Schools in six townships of Kachin State and seven townships in northern Shan State.

By May 2019, the five partners had signed contracts with UNOPS and started their inception phases when they finalised MEAL plans and conducted conflict and context analysis, supported by technical assistance from RAFT.

During the second half of 2019, LIFT focused on finalising the investment in Kachin and northern Shan State by addressing an imbalance of selected projects and partners that had resulted in a limited presence in non-government-controlled areas.

LIFT's Fund Management Office reviewed and reconsidered three proposal/partners submitted but not selected during the first round, with the aim of improving reach to non-government controlled areas, working with relevant government departments and ethnic service providers (particularly for nutrition), and creating synergies with existing humanitarian and peace building initiatives.

Three additional proposal were selected:

Health Poverty Action - Improve Nutrition Status of the Vulnerable Population in Conflict-Affected Kachin and Northern Shan

The project works to improve the nutrition status of people, especially women and children, in conflict-affected communities of Kachin and northern Shan. It addresses barriers in food security, access to WASH facilities, health and nutrition services through women's empowerment approaches. Health Poverty

Action has extensive experience working with vulnerable and hard-to-reach communities some of whom are internal migrants from Rakhine working on Chinese-owned plantations and are not reached by any services.

World Concern - Improving the Nutrition Outcomes of Conflict-Affected People in Kachin State

The project works to improve nutrition outcomes for women, adolescent girls and children aged under two. The interventions focus on nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive activities and include community-level awareness and women's empowerment activities to support mothers to adopt the recommended infant and young child feeding practices, with special attention to the First 1,000 Days of life. An emphasis on improving adolescent girls' and mothers' nutrition is included to break the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition. Nutrition-sensitive activities focussed on improving local availability of nutritious foods, particularly fortified foods and vegetables are also planned.

Neyin (Shalom) Foundation - Supporting Nutrition and Livelihoods through Self Help Groups in Kachin State

The project works on social cohesion and skills development to increase household financial status through strengthening community-based mechanisms and livelihood opportunities. The project reaches people in Kachin camps for internally displaced people who are not reached by other civil society organisations (CSO) and works with adolescents and young children.

The additional three partners have extensive experience working with specific subsets of needs and contribute to a complex nexus approach to reaching the most vulnerable by supporting the strengthening of systems and community-based approaches in both government- and non-government-controlled areas.

Overall, under the Kachin and northern Shan State programme there is a strong focus on local CSO with a high number of prominent organisations: Shalom, KMSS, KBC, Kokang Charity Alliance (KCA), Community Health and Development (CHAD), Namkyeo ParahitaNamkyeo ParahitaNamkyeo, Shan State Youth Capacity Building Centre (SSYCBC), Wunpawng Ninghtoi (WPN). The localisation and role of local partners is crucial to ensuring the programme can meet the diverse needs of communities. It is also an essential part of reaching the vulnerable and operating in areas where access is limited.

The Upland Township Fund that provides small grants for CSO was extended by LIFT in October, 2019 to facilitate close engagement with local partners, enable longer-term support to build capacity, and increase LIFT's ability to operate in remote and hard-to-reach areas and support relationship building at the township level.

In October 2019, LIFT launched a new call for proposals to build an agriculture, markets and food systems component into the Kachin and northern Shan State programme. The call focussed on creating greater market opportunities for agricultural products within the face of increasing climate variability and change in order to contribute to improvements in the livelihoods and food/nutrition security of rural communities and internally displaced people. Six proposals were submitted and appraised by LIFT. One proposition is being developed for LIFT Fund Board's consideration.

Additionally, LIFT finalised the design of a land component for Kachin and northern Shan to be implemented by Metta that was endorsed by LIFT in the previous round of proposals.

The Metta Ring Chying project will contribute to ensuring equitable, secure and safe land access and tenure rights for conflict-affected communities in Kachin and northern Shan States. Through a process of knowledge sharing and capacity building the project aims to empower and upskill conflict-affected communities to better assert their rights to land and natural resources. To support this and generate new knowledge, the project will undertake studies associated with conflict-affected communities and land issues with the objective of exploring durable solutions. This will support strategic policy engagement with stakeholders promoting specific recourse actions to be taken with improvements in legal frameworks.



LIFT's Uplands Township Fund approach creates foundations for effective emergency responses

The original design of the Uplands Township Fund recognised that the systems approach of the fund may also be applicable to respond to crises and emergencies. This assumption was tested during 2019.

Eight civil society organisations (CSO) received grants in Kutkai Township, northern Shan State. Most CSOs were volunteer-based associations or religious-based organisations including Buddhists and Christians and ethnic youth groups (mainly Kachin, Ta-Ang and Bamar) and prahita groups that provide free ambulance services. These included a network named Zingkri formed by Kachin CSOs in 2011 with a focus on human rights protection and Northern Shan State Buddhists Youth (NSSBY) that was formed by Ta-ang youths. However, there were few chances for the groups to connect with each other. Through the Uplands Township Fund, the CSOs started to know each other. Both Zingkri and NSSBY received grants. Through regular CSO meetings facilitated by NSSBY, CSO participation became more inclusive and diverse, representing different communities that live in Kutkai township. The regular CSOs meeting became the Kutkai CSO Network that included CSOs, prahita groups, ethnic based groups from Ta-ang, Kachin, Bamar and Gawrakha and they organised regular quarterly coordination meetings. They also became more connected with other NGOs and CSOs working for internally-displaced people in Kutkai and Lashio, and with other CSOs in northern Shan receiving grants from LIFT's Upland Township Fund. So, when armed conflict intensified again in 2019, Kutkai based CSOs were a lot more organised, coordinated and connected than before and had strong will to provide emergency assistance to internally-displaced people. They had trust with their

communities and became the first point of contact for many of the communities that were affected by armed clashes. They undertook many responses and roles while NGOs and other humanitarian CSOs were mostly only able to reach the camp population. Working together, they rescued trapped people and injured civilians with prahita groups' ambulance; they shared information about the situation and location of trapped displaced people; they sent emergency food and non-food items to trapped villagers; they negotiated with different armed groups to rescue people; they provided temporary shelters for families, children and people with disabilities, and they referred people to camps. They also contacted other NGOs to provide emergency support for the people they had supported.

Led by Zingkri, they submitted a proposal to the Upland Township Fund for a core grant for providing emergency assistance to internally-displaced people. The project was jointly implemented by different CSOs demonstrating a collective initiative with strong networking. The CSOs included Zingkri, the Shan State National Network, Noble Heart prahita group, Karuna social support group (Ta-ang group), Kutkai Kachin Baptist Association and Gawrakha social support group. The group involved in the grant also raised their collective voice, by joining in a statement with other CSOs across Myanmar calling on armed groups to ease the conflict, to avoid harming civilians and to respect human rights and humanitarian law through a collective CSO Statement that was distributed at the national level. Kutkai CSOs' collective emergency response is a good example of the benefits of an approach based on stronger connections and joint action, and a systems approach that combines direct support and advocacy.

Looking ahead

LIFT's Kachin and northern Shan State Programme comprises a package of integrated interventions that work in government- and non-government-controlled areas with relevant government and non-government service providers and is creating synergies with existing humanitarian and peace building initiatives. Under this programme, LIFT and partners explore, identify and pursue opportunities for coordinated research and advocacy to support policy development and amplify civil society voices. As the relationship between vulnerability, nutrition, resilience, protection, food security and indebtedness is not linear, a better understanding of the causes of vulnerability should inform an integrated programme, across implementing partners, that responds to the multiple pathways that lead to vulnerability, and in so doing also reduces the complex vulnerability risk factors. The programme provides an overall framework for integration to guide the implementation of projects and ensure that synergies, complementarities and coordination between them are effectively leveraged to maximise impact.

An integrated programme requires greater coordination and closer working relationships between IPs to identify synergies and maximise impact. This will be underpinned by a programme MEAL Framework that includes an integrated programme Theory of Change, a set of programme-level policy and learning objectives and associated plan, programme level indicators, and a structured approach to programme-level cross-learning and adaptation. The overall MEAL approach will be refined in collaboration with implementing partners and relevant stakeholders and will include opportunities for capacity support and guidance on MEAL where necessary.

The programme policy and learning objectives will build on the existing LIFT evaluation and learning questions and will explore:

- » Inclusion of internally displaced people and returnees in development programmes
- » Gender equality and women's empowerment
- » Social inclusion and specifically the inclusion of women, youth and people living with disabilities
- » Programmes in the ethnic/border states and conflict-affected areas
- » Work with governing authorities on targeted policies and policy reforms
- » Mainstreaming conflict sensitivity across the programme

LIFT will establish an IP coordination mechanism that will bring IPs together every two months to share information and address key issues. This will help to ensure that partners are able to keep updated on the rapidly changing conflict dynamics, including camp closures, and coordinate and adapt their activities accordingly. The coordination mechanisms will aim to maximise the collective impact of the programme partners through harmonisation of technical approaches, ensuring coherent policy and advocacy work, identifying areas of joint work and coordinating complementary interventions, strengthening relations with local counterparts and decision-makers, reducing fragmentation and exchanging of knowledge, tools and approaches. The IP coordination mechanisms will place particular emphasis on conflict-sensitive ways of working and the implementation of LIFT's conflict sensitivity principles.

Appropriate platforms and mechanisms for engaging with the government and ethnic service providers will also be sought, giving due consideration to the ongoing conflict dynamics and their implications for inclusion and participation of all stakeholders. Coordination mechanisms will be facilitated by two LIFT programme coordinators based in Myitkyina and Lashio in early 2020.

The South-East

Context

The South-East of Myanmar, which refers to Bago and Tanintharyi Divisions, and Mon, Karen, Kayah and southern Shan States, has seen a complex shift in village, district and state-level dynamics since bilateral ceasefire agreements were signed between the Karen National Union (KNU), the Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) and the Myanmar government in 2012. The National Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) process added momentum to the peace process that began bilaterally, though the perceived lack of progress on implementing the NCA has introduced a new level of uncertainty.⁵⁵

The situation in 2019 was complex. In addition to the ethnic armed organisations (EAOs), other armed groups hold authority over some areas in the South-East. Some of them are affiliated with Myanmar's military and have been renamed as Border Guard Forces.

⁵⁵ In 2012, the KNU, NMSP, and KNPP (like many other armed groups) signed bilateral ceasefire agreements with the Myanmar government and entered the peace process. The KNU signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in 2015, along with two other smaller EAOs in Kayin State. The KNPP and NMSP did not sign, although the earlier bilateral agreements remain valid. Initial EAO signatories to the NCA included the Karen National Union, the KNU-KNLA Peace Council, the Pa-O National Liberation Organisation and the Restoration Council of Shan States. In 2018 these groups were joined by the New Mon State Party and the Lahu Democratic Union.

Three broad categories of conflict-affected territory exist:

- » Areas controlled by EAOs (mostly along the Thai border, off the main roads and away from towns)
- » Areas of mixed control where EAOs' authority blends with government authority in an intricate and locally context-specific way
- » Areas where the government maintains control but tensions with competing authorities remain
- » Progress towards sustainable peace since 2012 has been slow.

The ceasefires have generally been upheld but there has been limited progress in implementing the Interim Arrangements outlined in the NCA. In 2019, the KNU initially withdrew its full participation, but now appears to be re-engaging with the aim of ensuring there is continuity beyond the 2020 election. Recent statements suggest shifts in political dynamics affecting the KNPP may result in their engagement with the peace process. The National Reconciliation and Peace Centre have suggested publicly that the KNPP is willing to consider signing the NCA.

Changes in the political contests between conflicting parties have a direct effect on communities' livelihood opportunities and control over natural resources, especially for those living under the control or influence of EAOs.

The peace agreements had a mixed effect on the context. Restrictions on movement were lifted in several areas, opening opportunities to travel between villages and districts; levels of violence and intimidation decreased, including reduced civilian abuse, and specifically a reduction in levels of violence targeting women. Increased participation of civil society groups in development processes and civic engagement by local populations increased due to the NCA. There are now opportunities to improve social services and address the longer-term needs of refugees and IDPs.

New communications technologies and transport infrastructure connect communities, adding impetus to the peace process. There is increasing potential for new investment opportunities, access to natural resources and new livelihood opportunities, including in agribusiness and non-agricultural sectors.

These developments have been welcomed by many, including state and non-state actors, but in the absence of a strong rule of law and in the face of weak governance mechanisms, the changes in relationships between stakeholders and the competition to gain leverage over resource streams could escalate tensions.

The Interim Arrangements clauses in Chapter 6 of the NCA create uncertainty for local populations, creating parallel structures in areas of mixed control,

potentially adding to the fragility and vulnerability of communities.

Failure to implement the agreement also fuels tensions. The issues of taxation, citizenship registration, land ownership and usage are all affected by this dynamic. Development itself is also often viewed with suspicion.

Land ownership mechanisms and land use practices vary across the states and regions, and in EAO-controlled areas, forms of land tenure and the issuing of certificates vary from one area to another. Traditional communal land use practices add complexity to development initiatives that impact on land.

Land disputes include concerns over the confiscation and misuse of land and complaints against 'land acquisition' either without compensation, or without the free prior and informed consent of communities affected by investment projects. The history of associated land disputes fuels underlying tensions and adds to the sensitivity of land-related development activities.

Despite recent democratisation efforts, the South-East remains heavily militarised. Military officials, and connected investors retain significant holdings in commercial mining and other natural resource-based enterprises, while the legacy of 'land acquisition' continues to affect many rural areas. This association between investment, development and the consolidation of power and authority, is part of the dynamic that escalates the concerns of communities and civil society organisations.

Major infrastructure projects including the construction of roads, dams, hydro-electric power stations and pipelines are highly controversial. National and local civil society networks are actively opposed to many of these projects. Some of these investment initiatives include government and EAO support and involvement.

In addition to the concerns of civil society and communities directly affected there are also deeper concerns about the implications of opening development and investment opportunities in Myanmar, without fully addressing or acknowledging the depth of grievances among EAOs. Seeking a developmental solution without adequately addressing the underlying political concerns has the potential to obstruct the ability of EAOs to have their grievances fully addressed.

Conflict has generated repeated, long-term displacement within Myanmar's borders and into neighbouring countries. Large-scale land acquisitions and development-related displacement continue to generate further displacement across the South-East. Continuing conflict, tensions and a lack of cross-

party agreement make many people in border areas of south-eastern Myanmar and elsewhere reluctant to join official systems for settlement. The number of humanitarian agencies active in the area, and the absence of effective coordination mechanisms add to the complexity of the context.

At least 162,000 people are estimated to remain internally displaced in the rural areas of 26 townships across the South-East.⁵⁶ These estimates are based on international standards that recognise internally displaced persons as having been forced to leave their homes due to armed conflict, generalised violence, large-scale development projects or natural disasters. Internal displacement in the region has many faces. Some internally displaced people live hidden in the jungle. The army have resettled others into forced relocation sites. Only a small number of displaced people in south-east Myanmar live in camps.⁵⁷

The expansion of extractive industries, commercial agriculture and road construction into ethnic territories during the ceasefire period exacerbated deforestation. Watershed areas in the South-East appear to have become more prone to flooding and landslides as a result. It has been estimated that over 38,000 people in communities affected by conflict have been displaced by natural disasters during the past five years in the South-East.⁵⁸

By June 2019, there were around 95,000 people from Myanmar in Thailand's nine refugee camps.⁵⁹ A large share of the country's undocumented migrants may also have grounds to be recognised as refugees; however, Thailand is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention.⁶⁰ Since June 2013, UNHCR has piloted a system to assess spontaneous returns to the South-East, a process that may start in the absence of an organised voluntary repatriation operation. A verified return village is a village where UNHCR has confirmed there are refugees and/or internally displaced people who have returned since January 2012 with the intention of remaining permanently. By the end of 2018, more than 4,000 refugees and almost 11,500 internally displaced people had returned to more than 400 villages.⁶¹ There are preparations for a 'facilitated' repatriation programme by the Thai and Myanmar Governments along with international actors such as the UNHCR,

the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Thai foundation Mae Fah Luang. The efforts to repatriate refugees to Myanmar with United Nations support progresses slowly, even as international donors cut funding to camps in Thailand where the refugees are living. According to several reports from civil society groups, the main challenges the returnees face are safety, sustainable livelihood opportunities and a lack of education and health services.

The majority of communities living in areas affected by conflict in the South-East are engaged in the agriculture sector, and many continue to rely on subsistence and smallholder farming for their livelihoods, including shifting hillside paddy cultivation, collection of non-timber forest products, livestock raising and orchard cultivation. In many areas, income diversity levels are low and a lot of smallholder farmers rely largely on a single income source.

Decades of conflicts and instability, as well as limited income opportunities, have resulted in large-scale labour migration to neighbouring countries, especially Thailand, and remittances continue to be a lifeline for communities who have low incomes and a shortage of food.⁶²

Recent cross-sectoral analysis indicates high levels of vulnerability in the South-East, primarily due to ongoing conflict and very low access to basic services and infrastructure. Low levels of population density in upland areas also exacerbates limitations on social protection and capacities to respond to natural disasters.⁶³

In terms of **nutrition and food security**, malnutrition rates vary across the South-East. Stunting affects 41 per cent of children aged under five in Kayah State and around 26 per cent of children under five in Kayin State. Pockets of high malnutrition are not uncommon within areas with relatively low levels of malnutrition. For example, the prevalence of malnutrition in Thandaunggyi Township in Kayin State is much higher than the state average: around 53 per cent of children are stunted, 15 per cent show wasting and around one-third are underweight. Stunting levels are above 40 per cent in all sub-townships, and are high among all income groups.⁶⁴ These figures were confirmed by findings of a recent

⁵⁶ Human Security in South Eastern Myanmar, TBC November 2018

⁵⁷ *Before You Were Born, your Mother Ran*. Displacement and disillusion in South East Myanmar, TBC, December 2019.

⁵⁸ Human Security in South Eastern Myanmar, TBC November 2018

⁵⁹ RTG/MOI-UNHCR. UNHCR, 30 June 2019

⁶⁰ *Before You Were Born, your Mother Ran*. Displacement and disillusion in South East Myanmar, TBC, December 2019.

⁶¹ UNCHR Return Assessment, December 2018

⁶² Human Security in South Eastern Myanmar, TBC November 2018

⁶³ Vulnerability in Myanmar MIMU-HARP 2018

⁶⁴ Improving the Incomes and Nutrition Outcomes of Rural Poor in Northern Kayin State: Nutritional Causal Analysis, Consortium of Dutch NGO's (CDN), World Concern Myanmar(WCM), Cordaid October 2016–January 2017

baseline survey on nutrition indicators conducted by CPI and Valid International in Kayin and Kayah States and are reported in more detail in the Nutrition chapter of this report.

Poverty and food insecurity remain prevalent across the South-East, and are particularly concentrated in rural, upland and more remote areas. Data from the Myanmar Micronutrient and Food Consumption Survey⁶⁵ reported the highest rates of food security in Mon (86 per cent of households) and Tanintharyi (77 per cent of households) and lowest in Kayah (21 per cent of households) and Kayin (37 per cent). A similar pattern exists for household dietary diversity scores (HDDS), with Kayin faring the worst (68 per cent of households having a HDDS score below 6), followed

by Kayah (53 per cent of households). In terms of poverty, Tanintharyi has the lowest proportion of households falling below the poverty line at 13 per cent. This is followed by Mon (19 per cent), Kayin (24 per cent) and Kayah (32 per cent).⁶⁶

Ceasefires have seen an increased presence of international and local development organisations in the South-East implementing livelihood projects, including microfinance and agriculture projects. There is a great need for these interventions as agriculture will continue to be the main local employment sector for years to come and economic gains will depend on transportation infrastructure, improved agricultural practices, access to markets and value chains, financial resources and vocational skill training.

Table 3.7: LIFT projects in the South-East

| Implementing partner | Project Name | Main activities | Duration | Geographic coverage |
|---|---|---|---------------------|--|
| DSW (Department of Social Welfare of MSWRR) | Support to DSW MCCT programme in Kayin State | Operational grant is support of MCCT programme. Coordination, monitoring, SBCC | Feb 2019 - Jun 2020 | Kayin State |
| DSW (Department of Social Welfare of MSWRR) | Support to DSW MCCT programme in Kayah State | Operational grant is support of MCCT programme. Coordination, monitoring, SBCC | Feb 2019 - Jun 2020 | Kayah State |
| Karen Development Network (KDN) | Enhanced Livelihood for Displaced People (ELDP) | TVET, construction of community training centre, social protection, natural resources management | Jun 2016 - Jun 2020 | Thanithayi Region |
| Stitching ZOA, The Netherlands, registered as Consortium of Dutch NGOs (CDN) in Myanmar | Improving the incomes and nutrition outcomes of rural poor in Northern Kayin State | Nutrition, WASH, agriculture, value chain, social protection, disaster risk reduction, small infrastructures | Jun 2016 - Jun 2020 | Thandaunggyi Township, north Kayin State |
| Swissaid, Metta, GRET | Uplands Township Fund for Civil Society (UTF) | Small grants for CSOs-livelihood | Jan 2019 - Jun 2021 | Kayah State |
| The Border Consortium (TBC) | Sustainable Transformation of Agriculture, Nutrition and Development for Uplands (PHAS-TUP)-PHASE 2 | Natural resource management including land rights, nutrition, WASH, social protection, capacity building for local stakeholders (CSOs and ESPs) | Sep 2019 - Aug 2022 | Kayah, Kayin, Mon States and Thanithery Region |

⁶⁵ MoHS (2018) Myanmar Micronutrient and Food Consumption Survey

⁶⁶ WB (2018) Myanmar Living Conditions Survey 2017: Report 3, Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon, Myanmar: WB.

Highlights

South-East Myanmar Programme call for concept notes

During August to November 2019, LIFT developed the South-East Programme framework through a combination of desk review work, consultations in Yangon and a scoping mission of three weeks in the South-East in Kayah, Kayin, Mon States and Tanintharyi Region.

A working group, comprising FMO staff, two Fund Board members and two international consultants was formed to develop the programme framework. During the scoping mission, consultations were held with a wide range of actors representing the government, ethnic armed organisations (EAO), INGOs, local NGOs, CSOs, ethnic service providers, private sector actors and selected beneficiaries of LIFT interventions. In November 2019, a call for concept notes was launched with a 16 December deadline for submission.

LIFT's programming in the South-East is guided by the LIFT strategy 2019-2023. LIFT's purpose is to strengthen the resilience and sustainable livelihoods of poor and vulnerable groups in Myanmar, particularly women, internally displaced people and returnees, migrants, smallholder farmers, landless people, people with disabilities and those vulnerable to trafficking and forced labour.

Operating within the interim arrangements in a conflict sensitive manner, LIFT's programme in the South-East of Myanmar aims to lay the groundwork for, and catalyse, where possible, inclusive, climate-resilient and sustainable development in the region that addresses food, nutrition and livelihood security of the most vulnerable. This includes a specific focus on internally displaced people, returnees, women, youth and those at risk of labour exploitation. Based on the scoping mission and consultations carried out by LIFT, four programme components were defined for the South-East.

These are:

- » Support maternal and child cash transfers (MCCT) with social behaviour change (SBC) for nutrition approaches in Kayah and Kayin States
- » Uplands: promoting resilient livelihoods for food and nutrition security
- » Lowlands: accelerating inclusive market development for economic growth and poverty reduction
- » Ending labour exploitation and trafficking in key sectors: focus on marine capture fisheries

- » Sixty-three concept notes were received by the submission date and were appraised by a LIFT team supported by two consultants. The final proposition for the South-East Programme was submitted to the Fund Board in March 2020, and the selected partners will develop a full project proposal in collaboration with LIFT during the second quarter of the year.

The Border Consortium STAND UP project

The Border Consortium's STAND UP project ended its first phase in September 2019. In just over two years, the STAND UP project made a significant contribution towards strengthening the food security and sustainable livelihoods of communities affected by conflict. Over 71,000 individuals spread across 641 villages directly benefited from development initiatives coordinated through ethnic service providers and civil society organisations.

The promotion of rights-based approaches to natural resource management has been one of the pillars of the project. Land tenure security was strengthened for over 19,000 people through this project, primarily through land use certificates issued by the Karen National Union (KNU) and supplemented by recognition from the Government's farmland registration process. Similarly, over 3,300 farmers either reclaimed their abandoned agricultural fields, improved farming skills or accumulated productive assets after years of conflict-induced displacement.

STAND UP's impact in promoting equitable access and sustainable use of natural resources was generally positive. The most notable achievements related to securing land tenure rights of conflict-affected communities and raising awareness of rights-based approaches to forest and water governance. For example, the Karen Environmental and Social Action Network (KESAN) supported the KNU's Agriculture Department survey and demarcated a total of 18,367 household land plots across five townships (Bilin, Hpa-an, Thandaunggyi, Kyain Seik kyi and Hpapun) during the project. The average size of these plots was around 6 acres and 40 per cent of land titles were issued to women. Apart from strengthening household land tenure in the short term, KESAN also strengthened the KNU's Agriculture Department's capacity to administer the KNU's land policy.

KESAN assisted the KNU's Forestry Department to survey and demarcate community and agricultural lands within two reserved forests to protect biodiversity and prevent encroachment. After demarcation of the outer boundary of the 33,520 acre Mae Tae Tin Reserved Forest, betel nut gardens covering 181 acres and belonging to 44 households were recognised. The process was also applied to the Chaung Ma Ngyi Reserved Forest in Thandaunggyi area, which covered 27,443 acres. The team demarcated 61 plots of local community members' gardens, orchards and plantations within the reserved forest benefiting 46 households.

In the water supply, sanitation and nutrition interventions under the STAND UP project public awareness campaigns reached more than 18,000 individuals to promote behavioural changes. Around 6,000 households benefited from improved access to domestic water supply and more than 5,000 households have improved access to sanitary latrines.

Gravity-flow water supply systems and shallow wells were constructed in more than 50 villages after consultation with local watershed management committees to mitigate any negative impacts for villages downstream. Water supply infrastructure saves community members time that they used to spend collecting water for domestic purposes. The gravity-flow water supply systems provide clean water delivering improved health benefits for communities.

Apart from protecting water sources from dirt, animals and foliage, water quality was further improved through the installation of multi-stage water filtration systems using readily available materials such as gravel, sand and charcoal. The Border Consortium organised two week-long workshops on the construction of water treatment centres with 30 CSO staff, utilising a customised training manual. The workshop provided hands on experience for participants in every stage of construction of water treatment units that service approximately 60 households each.

STAND UP partners coordinated the installation of sanitary latrines in communities. This household infrastructure was complemented by public awareness campaigns to promote awareness about environmental hygiene and to decrease the prevalence of water borne diseases. Information was disseminated about fly-proofing latrines, hand-washing practices, toilet use and maintenance, protecting water sources and facilities, and preventing the spread of infectious diseases.

Given the inability of government service providers to reach many conflict-affected communities, the role of agencies affiliated with ethnic armed organisations in responding to these basic needs is essential. The STAND UP project enabled a renewed focus among ethnic health service providers on nutrition promotion. After a decade without dedicated funding for nutrition promotion in conflict-affected areas, the project supported the Karen Department of Health and Welfare and the Backpackers Health and Welfare Team to rollout public awareness campaigns, surveillance guidelines and treatment protocols. This investment in developing public health systems will be further expanded in Phase Two of the project with the inclusion of the New Mon State Party and the Karenni National Progressive Party's health

services and with the participation of ethnic health organisations in the Department of Social Welfare's maternal and child health cash transfer (MCCT) programme, for the delivery of cash and social and behaviour change approaches in non-government controlled areas.

Despite all the project's efforts, the endline survey conducted by the project on food security and nutrition reflects how chronic and widespread vulnerability cannot be addressed by short-term interventions. Acute and chronic malnutrition rates remain high with the vast majority of mothers with children aged under 2 not exclusively breastfeeding for the child's first six months. Poor access to safe drinking water and sanitary latrines, and little access to agricultural land result in limited opportunities for income generation and diverse diets.

The challenge remains to build on the network of trust that has developed between LIFT, The Border Consortium and local implementing partners to substantively address the needs and concerns of conflict-affected communities. LIFT's initial investment has made a meaningful contribution supporting these communities to 'hang in'. The opportunity now exists to build on this foundation with a more strategic partnership to promote people-centered responses and ensure that no one is left behind.

An independent evaluation commissioned by LIFT in March 2019 reflected positively on the approach and achievements of STAND UP.⁶⁷ The project's performance was ranked as 'very high' for relevance; 'good' in terms of gender equality and value for money; and 'reasonable' in regard to effectiveness and efficiency. A 'low' ranking in terms of sustainability reflects how the systems and capacities developed during the initial two-year project require ongoing support in order to alleviate the chronic vulnerability of conflict-affected and displaced communities. LIFT extended the project to a second phase, which will last three years and expand the support to 16 ethnic service providers and CSOs in Mon, Kayah and Kayin States and in Tanintharyi Region.

Barrier analysis of exclusive breastfeeding practices in Thandaunggyi Township, Kayin State

The Consortium of Dutch NGOs-ZOA project in Kayin State began in mid-2016 with an inception phase when a nutrition causal analysis and a baseline survey were done. Malnutrition prevalence was found to be 'high' to 'very high', while awareness of infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices was 'low'. In addition, diarrhoea rates among children aged under five were found to be extremely high in all seasons. The project implemented a nutrition component in its multi-sectoral programme, which also aims to increase farm production, economic

⁶⁷ Johan van Duijn, March 2019, Final Evaluation of STAND UP (Revised version), pages 29-31

returns and reduce vulnerability to shocks and stresses through interventions in agriculture, value chains, road improvement, community-managed disaster risk reduction and savings groups.

The project's nutrition-related activities started in February 2017. These included quarterly community sessions, establishing and supporting mother-to-mother groups, training nutrition focal points and mother's group leaders. By the end of 2019, more than 2,000 households were reached with nutrition-sensitive information and more than 2,300 households were reached with WASH sensitive information and 17 villages benefited from improved water infrastructure, reaching over 1,000 households.

Mid-term survey results related to breastfeeding practices showed the early initiation of breastfeeding within one hour after birth increased from 78 per cent at baseline to 84 per cent. Exclusive breastfeeding increased substantially from 6 per cent to 38 per cent, with a noticeable difference among the different age groups: 75 per cent of infants aged under 1 month were exclusively breastfed, 32 per cent of 2-3 months olds and 31 per cent of 4-5 months olds. Low rates of exclusive breastfeeding were closely related to the practice of feeding newborns something other than breast milk during the first three days of life; 44 per cent of children under 6 months received water, 14 per cent were fed infant formula and nearly one-quarter of children under six months received rice or porridge. Exclusive breastfeeding rates in Thandaungyi Township were still substantially lower than the national rates reported in the Demographic Health Survey.

So, in 2019, a barrier analysis assessment was conducted to examine the determinants of exclusive breastfeeding in the township. The mothers who exclusively breastfed for the recommended period had the necessary knowledge and skills, confidence, could see the benefits, and had the support of close family members. They also believed that exclusive breastfeeding protected their baby against malnutrition and diarrhoea. The main barriers identified were: lack of confidence, mothers' perceptions that they lacked the knowledge and skills, lack of time, mothers did not see the benefits, and mothers were not supported. It was concluded that women who did not exclusively breastfeed did not understand the links between breastfeeding and avoiding malnutrition and diarrhoea. The research was used to improve how nutrition messages were delivered and which messages were emphasised.

Enhanced livelihoods for displaced people (ELDP) - Karen Development Network (KDN)

With LIFT's funding, the Karen Development Network operates the Community Vocational Training Centre (CVTC) that delivers six vocational training courses for internally displaced people in 33 villages in Tanintharyi Region. Demand for training is high

among the targeted community and beyond. There are more applications than there are spaces available. The KNU, CVTC board members and local village development committees connected to the centre selected suitable individuals to participate in the training. The duration of each training course was extended from 45 to 60 training days at the requests of trainers and trainees who wanted to deepen the learning experiences.

During 2019, 198 trainees graduated and 44 trainees participated in advanced courses. National Skills Standard Authority tests were conducted so trainees could become certified for the skills they attained and 90 per cent of trainees in masonry and carpentry received NSSA certification. In 2019, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population led additional training at the centre on safe migration and employment. Some trainees participated in internship placements with the private sector.

The project's target area is under mixed control of the government and KNU. KDN designed the CVTC based on local experience of successes and failures in training programmes for returnees, internally displaced people, refugees and other conflict-affected groups. Learnings from these experiences included the value of medium-term rather than short-term training courses and the importance of job placements or small start-up loans for graduate trainees. Some challenges remain. Most of the courses prepare graduates for working in the local area but some seek more advanced skill sets that equip them to migrate for work to urban areas.

In 2019, the career advisor organised a workshop on how to succeed in the job market, covering: safe employment standards, migration, job application processes, job interviews, preparing a curriculum vitae and application letter. Two job fairs were held in Dawei and Hpa-Han, where speakers from different business sectors, such as construction, hotels and tourism addressed students and answered their questions about employment. The project established contacts with the private sector in Dawei to engage trainees in job internships and employment. The centre is initiating collaboration with the Ministry of Labor to engage the trainees with the private sector in Tanintharyi Region and with labour agencies in Yangon.

It was intended that the training centre would support improved relations and cooperation between the Government and KNU, potentially linking with training being offered elsewhere and ensuring some equivalence in training certification between Myanmar and Thailand. Government and KNU did participate together in events organised by the project, including stakeholder meetings, but building relationships with a grinding peace process as a backdrop is challenging and requires consistency and vision. The project has contacts in the regional

government as well as with the KNU, including the Tanintharyi Minister for Karen Affairs. The project will continue to work towards strengthening these links over time so that senior stakeholders remain engaged in the vocational training centre.

Looking ahead

Over the past eight years LIFT invested in eight livelihood projects⁶⁸ in the South-East implemented by partners that included INGOs, NGOs and CSOs working in the region with an approximate total value of USD 19 million. However, these projects did not constitute a comprehensive and integrated programme and coordination, synergies and cross learning were not built into the programme design. Projects will be phased out over the course of 2019 up to mid-2020.

During the last quarter of 2019, LIFT designed the new geographic programme to support food and nutrition security as well livelihood development in Myanmar's South-East and launched the call for concept notes. It is expected that the selected partners will start to implement the proposed intervention in the second half of 2020. Once the contracting phase is finalised a programme MEAL framework will be developed with the participation and contribution of all implementing partners, based on the model of the Kachin and northern Shan State Programme.

Additional consultations will be held with different stakeholders including government and EAOs, in the respective states and region.

Since October 2018, LIFT supported the rollout of the Department of Social Welfare (DSW)'s maternal and child cash transfer (MCCT) programme in Kayah and Kayin States. LIFT supports operational costs for the first year of implementation and a baseline survey on nutrition indicators. The programme consists of three main components: 1) Maternal and child cash transfers, 2) Social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) and 3) Institutional capacity strengthening. The new LIFT programme for the South-East will provide opportunities to support the SBCC component of the Government's programme with technical assistance to DSW for the delivery of the social and behaviour change activities through teams of health workers from government and ethnic health organisations. An additional WASH component has been added to this programme to increase the impact on nutrition outcomes.

The Kayah, Kayin MCCT programme's start up was slow due to several challenges faced by DSW delivering cash in areas not under the direct control of the government. However, by December 2019, the programme had reached around 10,600 women in Kayah State and 40,800 women in Kayin State. In areas controlled by ethnic armed organisations cash is delivered by ethnic service providers such as the Karen Department of Health and Welfare (KDHW) in Kayin and the Civil and Health Development Network (CDHN) in Kayah State. The support to DSW for the operational costs will be extended up to the end of 2020. These activities are presented in more detail in the Nutrition Programme chapter of this report.

Rakhine State

Context

Rakhine State has the highest poverty rate in the country – 78 per cent compared to a national rate of 37.5 per cent, according to the 2014 World Bank review of poverty data.⁶⁹ Rakhine also has the highest unemployment rates in the country.⁷⁰ Rice cultivation is an important sector for Rakhine but the landless rate is high, accounting for almost one-quarter of the population.⁷¹ The landless population is economically vulnerable and dependent on fishing-related activities and seasonal daily labour, mainly in paddy fields. The nutritional status of children in Rakhine is among the worst in the country, with 38 per cent of children aged under five being stunted (18 per cent severely), 14 per cent wasted and 34 per cent underweight.⁷²

In 2012, intercommunal tensions escalated into violent clashes that resulted in the displacement of more than 120,000 people, mainly Muslim, to 38 camps and host communities in five townships. In October 2016, military operations in response to attacks by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) on a border guard outpost led to the displacement of some 87,000 people. In 2017, much larger, brutal and deadly military operations occurred in response to attacks on border guards at a police outpost on August 25, 2017. More than 742,000 people fled to Bangladesh to escape the violence in 2017, with displaced persons continuing to arrive in Bangladesh well into 2018. Denial of citizenship rights and severe restrictions on movement for most Muslims in Rakhine means they cannot access basic services and livelihood options. Internally displaced people in

⁶⁸ Including in South Shan and the FI programme.

⁶⁹ Assesses poverty against three dimensions – education, health and standard of living. Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2017, Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative. University of Oxford.

⁷⁰ The 2014 Myanmar Population and Housing Census, the Union Report, Census Report Volume 2, Department of Population, Ministry of Immigration and Population, The Republic of the Union of Myanmar, May 2015

⁷¹ Save the Children (2016), Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART) survey report, Pauktaw and Sittwe (Rural & Urban), Internally Displaced Persons Camps of Rakhine State, Myanmar

⁷² Myanmar Demographic Health Survey, 2016.

camps have no access to land, depleted assets and very limited income generation options. There are opportunities for casual work in construction and agriculture in camps and neighbouring villages, but the labour market is highly saturated. This results in high dependency on external assistance for food, hygiene and household needs. Significant barriers remain to identifying sustainable solutions for those in camps and for host communities, who need support on livelihoods to reduce their dependency, build resilience and offer prospects for greater dignity. The formal and informal restrictions on movement is one of these barriers.

Despite several arrangements and agreements signed by the Myanmar and Bangladeshi authorities and a Joint Working Group on repatriation, attempts to repatriate Muslim refugees in Bangladesh have been unsuccessful. Several attempts of planned repatriation have failed, with only very small numbers of people 'cleared' for repatriation accepting to return to Myanmar. Interviews conducted by UNHCR⁷³ clearly indicate generalised opposition to repatriation from the refugees in Bangladesh. Fear for their safety in places of repatriation remains and no progress was observed on questions of their citizenship in Myanmar.

Limited progress continues to be observed on the implementation of the recommendations of the Kofi Annan-led Advisory Commission on Rakhine State (RAC), which the Government committed to in 2017.⁷⁴ The finalisation of the *National Strategy for Resettlement of IDPs and Camp Closure*⁷⁵ by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement was perceived as the most notable progress made by the authorities. The strategy outlined processes at the national, state and township levels including the establishment of working committees and sub-committees that include participation of the affected populations and relevant stakeholders. However, by the beginning of 2020, there was no clarity on how and when these committees would be established. The most recent developments around the Kyauk Ta Lone camp in Kyaukphyu Township, where an uncoordinated camp closure was attempted, illustrate the difficulties for all levels of authorities to adhere properly to the mechanisms identified in the national strategy.

In May 2019, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) endorsed the principles⁷⁶ proposed by the protection sector as operating principles for humanitarian organisations working in camps for internally displaced people that are declared closed by the Government. These principles are intended to guide decisions on how to operate in these sites. But delays in their operationalisation across sectors and stakeholders, differences in their interpretation across stakeholders and limited engagement from HCT members with relevant authorities have resulted in marked divisions on appropriate approaches for working in 'closed' camps. The camp-specific monitoring frameworks⁷⁷ were finalised in early 2020. While introduced as the main tools to measure changes on freedom of movement to allow internally displaced people to access livelihoods, markets and non-segregated services, there is no consensus on how they can guide programmatic decisions and how change can be collectively assessed. Intercommunal tensions remain high and calls continue for more interventions promoting peaceful and sustainable coexistence.

The conflict between the Tatmadaw and the Arakan Army is a relatively new addition to the overall conflict in Rakhine State and adds an element of complexity to the relations the Union-level Government maintains with its States. Conflict with the Arakan Army escalated in late-2018. Conflict rapidly worsened during 2019, with clashes occurring daily in several townships of northern and central Rakhine and occasionally in some southern townships. The Government and the armed forces have maintained the existing strategy to quarantine news coverage through controlling travel, especially for media and local organisations delivering assistance to affected civilians. Mobile internet services were banned in June 2019 in nine townships, including Paletwa in southern Chin State. The ban remained for most of the second half of 2019. After being partially lifted in September 2019, it was reinstated in early 2020.

The conflict is taking a heavy toll on the civilian population, with tens of thousands of people displaced across the affected townships of central and northern Rakhine and Paletwa Township in Chin State. It is difficult to verify the numbers of newly arrived internally displaced people as access for aid groups is extremely limited. By the end of

⁷³ www.unhcr.org/news/press/2019/8/5d5e720a4/unhcr-statement-voluntary-repatriation-myanmar.html-myanmar.html

⁷⁴ The 2018 INGO Rakhine Initiative (IRI)'s review of the implementation process of the RAC recommendations highlighted "limited to superficial or not progress on 28 of the 44 recommendations analysed", which included recommendations on critical human rights, in particular freedom of movement and citizenship. The IRI report also concluded that they were more recommendations on which on there has been no progress than recommendations on which there has been progress

⁷⁵ National Strategy on Resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) and Closure of IDP Camps, Rebuilding Lives of IDPs in Safety and Dignity without Dependency, Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement, October 2019.

⁷⁶ Operating principles for humanitarian organizations in displacement sites declared closed by the government in central Rakhine, a position of the Myanmar protection sector.

⁷⁷ Framework for measuring progress on freedom of movement/access to livelihoods, monitoring framework

2019, the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported there were more than 60,000 new internally displaced people in Rakhine, a number also reported by the Government. The situation is changing rapidly as conflicts spread to new areas. Local organisations, such as the Rakhine Ethnic Congress, report more than 100,000 individuals being affected by the armed conflict in Rakhine. The World Food Programme and the Red Cross movements, alongside the Government and local groups, remain the main providers of humanitarian assistance. Towards June 2019, more agencies reported having some level of access, but access deteriorated in the second half of the year. Access that is granted is through travel authorisations that only allow the delivery of assistance on a limited number of days and generally only in urban areas. Recurrent fighting, displacements, military and police scrutiny and arrests on suspicion of support to the conflict's armed parties is further hampering the population's well-being and the already limited social cohesion. There are also concerns for the potential for disease outbreaks as living conditions in the displacement sites are poor.

LIFT's programming in Rakhine

There were notable changes to LIFT's Rakhine programming in 2019 in line with LIFT's 2019-2023 strategy and the new framework. New projects started following the call for proposals in late-2017

and there were several extensions of pre-existing projects. With more projects implemented in camps for internally displaced people and Muslim villages, LIFT now reaches more conflict-affected, deprived and marginalised groups than in the previous funding phase.

Operational challenges increased in 2019 as the security situation in several townships of central and northern Rakhine worsened, affecting granting of travel authorisations to areas where LIFT's funded work was programmed to expand the geographical reach. Several activities planned to start in 2019 in Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw, Myebon and Minbya Townships could not be implemented by international and local partners. In best case scenarios, such as in Mrauk-U Township, activities like training with beneficiaries from rural areas were carried out in urban centres only. Due to complexities in administrative issues, activities of the Tat Lan II project by the International Rescue Committee could not be continued in targeted areas of Myebon or Minbya Townships.

Security incidents also occasionally affected townships in southern parts of the State, including Gwa, Ann and Kyaukphyu, which also impacted implementation, in particular for financial inclusion partners. Finally, in the most northern townships of the State, Maungdaw and Buthidaung, access for LIFT's partners remained very constrained and limited to a defined number of villages proximal to the towns, again limiting capacities to reach more vulnerable and deprived communities.

Table 3.8: Rakhine State partners and main activities in 2019

| Implementing partner | Project name | Main activities | Duration | Geographic coverage |
|--|---|--|---------------------|---|
| Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) | Vocational skills and Livelihood opportunities for Youth in and out camps in Rakhine State - Phase II | Vocational skills training delivery | Jan 2019 - Dec 2020 | Sittwe, Maungdaw, Kyauktaw Townships - IDP camps and villages |
| International Labour Organization | Skills Development Project in Rakhine State (SDPRS) | Vocational skills training, TVET planning | Jul 2017 - Jun 2020 | Sittwe, Kyaukphyu, Thandwe, Maungdaw and Buthidaung Townships - villages only |
| International Rescue Committee | Tat Lan II | Agriculture, Infrastructure, Nutrition, WASH, Governance | Jan 2016 - Dec 2020 | Myebon, Minbya Townships - villages only |
| Pact Global Microfinance and Wan Lark | PGMF RAFIN | Agriculture loans, small business loans, savings, social loans, financial literacy and beneficiary welfare | Dec 2015 - Jun 2019 | Sittwe and Ponnagyun Townships- villages only |

78 Including in South Shan and the FI programme.

| Implementing partner | Project name | Main activities | Duration | Geographic coverage |
|--|---|---|----------------------|--|
| PATH | Establish fortified rice production and distribution in Rakhine | Rice fortification value chain | Oct 2013 - June 2020 | Kyauktaw, Minbya, Sittwe Townships |
| Relief International | Response Mechanisms for Addressing Protracted Displacement in Rakhine State | Livelihoods, Social cohesion, Governance | Jan 2019 - Dec 2021 | Myebon, Mrauk-U Townships - IDP camp and villages |
| Save the Children International & Community Empowerment & Resilience Association | Tat Lan Plus | Nutrition, Livelihoods, Skills Development, Infrastructure | Jan 2019 - Jun 2021 | Pauktaw, Sittwe, Mrauk-U Townships - IDP camps and villages |
| United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), Wan Lark and CARD | Leaving no one behind | Agricultural loans, small business loans, savings, social loans, financial literacy and beneficiary welfare | Dec 2019 - Dec 2022 | Thandwe, Kyauk Taw, Ponnagyun |
| UNOPS | Rakhine Communication Hub | Communication and communication support, CSOs and media outreach | Jun 2019 - May 2021 | Rakhine State |
| Vision Fund International | Financial inclusion in central Rakhine | Savings and loans | Sep 2018 - Sep 2021 | Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw, Kyaukphyu and Sittwe Townships - IDP camps and villages |
| World Food Programme | Relief distribution of fortified rice to vulnerable groups | Fortified rice distribution | Jul 2017 - Dec 2020 | Rakhine State - IDP camps |
| Yoma Bank | Yoma Bank Agri Business Finance Programme | Hire purchase scheme, Individual Development Accounts, Collateralised and under-collateralised loans | Dec 2015 - Jun 2020 | Rakhine State |

79 Project implementation on hold for the entire 2019 due to travel authorisations issues

80 Activities in Mrauk-U Township not started in 2019 due to access issues

81 Project not able to reach villages in Mrauk-U Township due to access issues

Highlights

In 2019, LIFT reached 189,315 people in Rakhine State: 68 per cent Rakhine and 32 per cent Muslims.

The current programming in Rakhine covers the four key thematic areas of LIFT's strategy.

Nutrition continues to be part of the International Rescue Committee's costed extension of Tat Lan Phase II, which extends the multisectoral interventions of Tat Lan Phase II but with a more limited scope. However, with IRC's administrative suspension by the Rakhine authorities, Tat Lan II's costed extension has yet to deliver the expected interventions and results.

Save the Children's Tat Lan Plus is a follow-up project to their former Tat Lan Phase II work that aims to reduce stunting in children aged under two through nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions. Tat Lan II nutrition monitoring results found a significant reduction of the stunting prevalence among children aged under two years in Tat Lan II areas between baseline and endline (from 20.4 per cent to 14.6 per cent) and highlighted the complementarity of the interventions delivered, especially the cash transfers, the nutrition social behaviour change communication and the access to clean water and sanitation infrastructures. Building on lessons learned from Tat Lan phases I and II, the Tat Lan Plus project now supports the rollout of the integrated management of acute malnutrition (IMAM) and infant and young child feeding (IYCF) guidelines of the Ministry of Health and Sports, which aim to institutionalise proper nutritional support within health services and systems. Tat Lan Plus also delivers essential treatment services for children affected by severe acute malnutrition (SAM) in camps for internally displaced people in Pauktaw, where government health services cannot reach.

PATH's rice fortification project works in Rakhine to establish the production and marketing chains of fortified rice in Rakhine. Parallel to this, the World Food Programme (WFP) continues to distribute fortified rice in its relief operations in camps for internally displaced people in Sittwe, reaching 53,791 individuals in 2019.

With IRC's administrative blockage, LIFT's work in agriculture, markets and food systems in Rakhine was significantly halted in 2019, in particular in areas related to improved rice production, where expansion of Tat Lan phase II's work with the Department of Agriculture on certified seeds and good agricultural practices was planned. Save the Children International's Tat Lan Plus project includes support to the development of small-scale nutrition-sensitive production systems in agriculture and fisheries and inclusion within value chains. The project also includes a public works component that supports the development of community

infrastructures through paid work for the most vulnerable groups, who have limited access to paid work and income.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) projects tackle decent work and labour mobility issues. ILO's skills development project for Rakhine State works towards a more demand-driven and inclusive technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system in Rakhine State. ILO's project works at different levels, within the systems and at community level, to provide greater access to a more market-oriented TVET system in Rakhine. In May 2019, the project was granted a one-year costed extension until June 2020. One of the ambitions of the extension is to support the establishment of accredited skills assessment centres to provide skills certification. In July 2019, the project established the first certification centre in Sittwe for occupational skills in the hotel and tourism industry. ILO's project mobilises stakeholders from within the Rakhine Government, the Department of Labour, the Department of Rural Development and the private sector.

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) works in partnership with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) to implement the second phase of the Vocational Training and Livelihoods Opportunities for Youth in Rakhine State project. The project provides training to vulnerable Muslim and Rakhine Buddhist youths aged 16 to 30 years to help them gain essential technical and life skills. Training is delivered through a mobile and centered-based approach, targeting camps for internally displaced people and villages in Sittwe, Kyauktaw and Maungdaw Townships. The project provides vocational and short-term trainings as well as soft and life-skills training to support youth in transitioning to decent work. In 2019, 1,328 youths were trained through short and vocational courses and 1,516 in soft and life skills.

Financial inclusion in Rakhine expanded in early 2019 with a new Vision Fund project that targets Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw and Sittwe Townships and has the ambition to make financial services available to Rakhine Buddhist and Muslim groups, including those in camps. By the end of 2019, Vision Fund reached 7,242 client beneficiaries in Rakhine of which 94 per cent were Rakhine and 6 per cent Muslims.

Aligning with LIFT's commitment to support long-term change that is inclusive and leaves no one behind, increasing importance is being placed on social cohesion and peaceful coexistence within LIFT programming in Rakhine. In 2019, this was particularly emphasised in the work that LIFT delivers with Relief International in Myebon Township on identifying durable and equitable solutions around the closure of the Taung Paw camp. While progress could be observed in some areas, with marginal but notable changes seen in local intercommunal relations,

more needs to be done in finding mechanisms to promote participatory community-based planning and accountability to all affected populations. LIFT maintains its commitment to increasingly work with Rakhine civil society, which LIFT perceives as an important future actor in identifying and operationalising durable solutions. At the end of December 2019, LIFT organised a lessons-learned event with more than 40 civil society organisations from Rakhine, which provided valuable insights on possible future programming and options for greater engagement.

In 2019, all LIFT's partners in Rakhine were supported by RAFT to mainstream conflict sensitivity within ongoing programming. Partners attended several rounds of training on conflict-sensitivity tools and received regular support from RAFT to identify areas where programmatic changes need to happen to mitigate and minimise risks of conflicts.

Myebon Taung Paw camp

In January 2019, Relief International launched a three-year project to address protracted displacement and provide technical assistance to facilitate a resettlement plan for the Myebon camp for internally displaced people. The project aims to support the authorities to resettle the camp in a manner that will be more inclusive of the affected population and ensure adherence to human rights, including freedom of movement, adequate access to livelihoods and public services.

A key activity of the project was establishing protection monitoring, with the creation and introduction of a comprehensive, community-based protection monitoring system using focus group discussions, key informant interviews, case management and referral. In June 2019, Relief International produced a protection report, with analysis and conclusions informed by the community-based monitoring system. The report captures critical gaps and positive developments in freedom of movement, relocation processes, migration, access to services and other protection-related topics. An interesting finding was how the departure of the police officers stationed at the entrance of the camp rapidly generated small, but encouraging, signs in terms of movements and access to livelihoods. Fishermen reported more access to the nearby jetty where they were able to fish without having to pay taxes. People from the camps also reported increased trade interactions with neighbouring Rakhine people. However, Muslims cannot access the township hospital in Myebon and are instead transferred to the Sittwe General Hospital.

Changes to freedom of movement and access to services will continue to be monitored by Relief

International and guide the support the project provides to people who are resettled.⁸² Advocacy continues with local authorities to restore access to the Myebon hospital, among other services, and to establish planning mechanisms that promote participation and ownership of solutions for all concerned parties. In 2019, Relief International held regular meetings and consultations with stakeholders in Rakhine, including local representatives of the Humanitarian Country Team and Inter-Cluster Coordination Group to jointly identify potential entry points for project support.

By end 2019/early 2020, 516 of the 642 planned longhouses were built by the local authorities. It is planned for internally displaced people to relocate to these longhouses from the longhouses where they have stayed since being displaced seven years ago. The new housing is located next to the existing longhouses.

Rakhine Communication Hub

The Rakhine Communication Hub project was set up in June 2019, following joint efforts by the international community, through the Cooperating Partners Group (CPG), to develop a Rakhine Communication Strategy. The strategy recommends a toolbox containing pro-active yet sensitive communication and media outreach approaches to improve the local knowledge and awareness concerning ongoing development work of the international community. It also aims at bridging existing communication gaps between international partners, local communities and local organisations. The Rakhine Communication Hub supports LIFT's and other implementing partners in understanding the local context better, improving communication and laying the foundation for better outreach to the Rakhine Population. It builds, develops, fosters and maintains good communication and collaboration channels between IPs, the international development and humanitarian actors, local CSOs and local media in Rakhine State. The hub delivers a range of activities with INGOs, local CSOs, UN organisations and local media for capacity building, coordination and communication, media production, community engagement and participatory media, support to local media and social media monitoring.

In 2019, the hub trained more 94 partners' staff (37 per cent women) in media literacy, communication and media production. The hub also assisted LIFT's Fund Management Office and IPs during LIFT Fund Board members visits, workshops, training and other events by preparing appropriate materials (videos, photos, media briefs) for communication outreach. On several occasions, the hub also organised media briefings and meetings between LIFT's

⁸² A number of options are under consideration so far, including support to small-scale food production systems (home gardening, aquaculture, hydroponics etc.) as each of the newly built houses have a 12X12sq ft plot available at the back

EMPOWERING FAMILIES TO ACHIEVE EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING FOR IMPROVED NUTRITION

Chaung Chi Dar is a young mother of a 3-month old child. With her husband and their elder child, they live in Thae Chaung camp for internally displaced people in Sittwe Township. The family sell vegetable snacks to earn their income - about MMK 2,500-3,000 (up to USD 2) per day. The family also receives food from the WFP food assistance programme. After giving birth Chaung Chi Dar tried to breastfeed her child. However, she quickly decided to stop because of the pain she felt while establishing breastfeeding and illness. Chaung Chi Dar started to feed milk powder to her child at a cost of MMK 1,000 a day, around half of the family's daily earnings.



When a Breastfeeding Counsellor and a Community Development Facilitator working with Save the Children's nutrition project visited and observed Chaung Chi Dar's situation they offered to support her to restart breastfeeding. They visited her daily for one month and quickly saw that the child was not being held in the optimal position and that was the cause of the pain. Chaung Chi Dar worried she did not have enough milk for her child and three days after resuming breastfeeding, she was close to stopping again.

The breastfeeding counsellor then engaged Chaung Chiu Dar's husband and neighbour to help encourage her in her efforts to breastfeed. The counsellor explained to the baby's father that he had a role as a primary caregiver for the child and his wife. The neighbour shared her experiences about when she was facing hard times herself learning to breastfeed her children. Chaung Chi Dar quickly became more comfortable and less worried. Her child is now exclusively breastfed, and Chaung Chi Dar says she will continue to exclusively breastfeed her baby at least until the baby reaches six months of age. While Chaung Chi Dar participates in the regular mother-to-other support group meetings organised by Save the Children, her husband attends the father-to-father support group and they are both learning about proper nutrition practices that will prepare them for when it is time to start complementary feeding for their baby.

donors and local media representatives. Twenty-nine videos were produced in 2019 by the Rakhine Communication Hub or by the partners' staff being trained on media production. Finally, among other efforts for better communication and engagement with local groups, youth groups in particular, the Rakhine Communication Hub facilitated weekly talks at the Akyab Institute.⁸³ During the weekly talks, representatives from international organisations joined students for open discussions. The talks are an opportunity for organisations to share information about their mandates and work in Rakhine and talk about other topics of interest such as humanitarian principles, human rights, gender and women's empowerment, nutrition and social cohesion.

Looking ahead

In 2020, LIFT will continue its commitment towards greater coordination and programmatic relevance within its programming in Rakhine. LIFT's Fund Management Office will maintain the existing open communication channels with IPs as the operational environment is expected to remain heavily constrained. The Rakhine team will continue the regular individual meetings with IPs, in Sittwe and in Yangon, as well as the quarterly coordination meetings set up in 2019, during which IPs share project and context updates, elements of their technical work and discuss potentials for alignment and synergies between projects.

The Rakhine team will maintain its engagement with other stakeholders, including other funds operating in Rakhine, to seek programme coordination and alignment. On nutrition, LIFT already works with Access to Health and the HARP Facility to discuss synergies between their respective programming. A working group is formed with staff from the three funds around a HARP-funded nutrition project that tests alternative approaches to delivering nutrition services in Rakhine and to include people with disabilities.

The Rakhine team will further invest with its implementing partners to mainstream work that delivers on social cohesion. A joint initiative with the HARP-Facility and the Paung Sie Facility highlighted the needs for continued engagement with partners, to foster learnings and exchanges from others, in particular local organisations. There is a need to collectively work on solutions around key problems that affect social cohesion, including local governance, inclusion and participation. This is particularly apparent when partners discuss the questions of camp closure: there is a need to promote constructive, participatory and equitable engagement when discussing how the national strategy for camp closure can be operationalised.

LIFT will work with its partners, mainstreaming their existing operations, resources and networks to support efforts that promote equity, transparency and peaceful coexistence. While this applies to the context of camp closure, it is also important that it expands to other areas, and contexts of Rakhine, not only to maximise conflict mitigation but also to contribute to conflict resolution.

With the objective of designing a new programme in Rakhine, in the second semester of 2019 and beginning of 2020, LIFT conducted a wide range of consultations and scoping visits with the local government and authorities, implementing partners, non-implementing partners, local organisations, civil society and the private sector. The scoping work focused on LIFT thematic areas but also on particular issues relevant to Rakhine, such as camp closure and social cohesion.

It was expected that the programme design document defining programme and beneficiaries focuses, thematic priorities and intervention modalities LIFT would fund would be ready in early-2020 so that the launch of the call for proposals/concept notes could occur towards the end of the first half of 2020.

At the time of the reporting, LIFT and its implementing partners are responding to the needs emerging in relation to the spread of COVID-19 in Myanmar, in particular through pivoting existing resources and projects towards preventing the spread of the virus, in particular among the most vulnerable groups, which could have devastating effects. As the situation is evolving rapidly, LIFT will constantly reassess the need to reshape its operations and programme in Rakhine State. Besides addressing other key issues in Rakhine, it will be key that LIFT funding, when necessary, contributes to mitigating and recovering from the impacts of the pandemic for the most deprived groups.

⁸³ The Akyab Institute is run by the local organization PDI/Kintha, which implements education programmes for peace and development. The Akyab Institute trains batches of young people on social sciences.

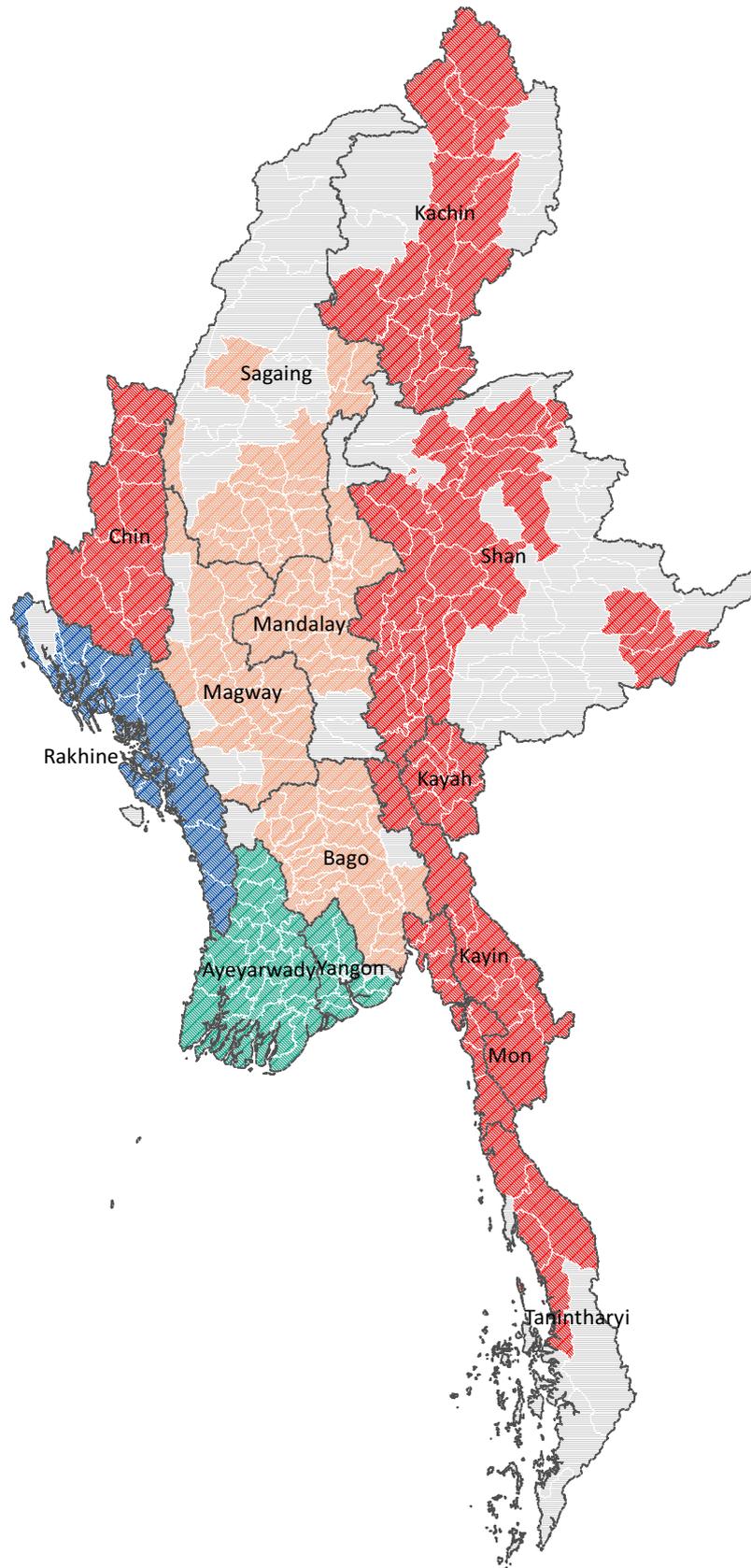


4

CROSS-CUTTING AREAS

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CROSS-CUTTING AREAS



LIFT projects across the country (2019)

4.1 POLICY

Policy Engagement

All LIFT's programmes have a focus on supporting governments and contributing to policy initiatives. Programmes' policy efforts and achievements are reported in Chapter 2: Results, Chapter 3: Thematic Programmes, Chapter 4: Cross-cutting areas and Annex 5.

This section presents an overall assessment of the policy work that LIFT's Fund Management Office and its implementing partners achieved during 2019 and reports on progress implementing LIFT's Policy Engagement Strategy.

Policy achievements in 2019

Each of LIFT's thematic programmes reports on four policy indicators and the achievements in 2019 against these indicators is presented in Chapter 2: Results. The four indicators relate to policy changes, budget allocations, events organised and publications produced.

Across LIFT in 2019, 207 policy events were convened and 78 publications were produced demonstrating substantial policy engagement over the year. There were 28 reported policy changes and eight changes in government budget allocations.

As budgeting is a fundamental requirement for policy implementation and sustainable programming, the imbalance between legislation and financing suggests that LIFT and its partners may need to focus more on the financial side of policy as well as the legislative side. This is discussed in more detail below.

Table 4.1: Policy achievements across LIFT in 2019

| | changes in policy | changes in budget allocation | policy events | policy publications |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Agriculture, Markets & Food Systems | 8 | 1 | 23 | 12 |
| Civil society Strengthening | 0 | 0 | 5 | 9 |
| Decent Work & Labour Mobility | 11 | 3 | 76 | 35 |
| Financial inclusion | 3 | 0 | 25 | 1 |
| Fund Management Office | 0 | 0 | 9 | 1 |
| Gender | 0 | 0 | 29 | 12 |
| Nutrition | 6 | 4 | 33 | 8 |
| Social protection | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 28 | 8 | 207 | 78 |

LIFT's Fund Management Office organises policy-related events and produces policy-related publications. However, the bulk of the achievements in policy are attributed to the work of IPs in their LIFT-funded projects, overseen by LIFT's thematic programmes.

It is not possible to determine from the indicator data the proportion of policy activities targeting union-level government or state/regional government. The thematic programmes and the cross-cutting areas report that there is considerable policy work taking place at the sub-national level. This will be an important factor to track in the future as local governance reforms gather momentum. It will also be important to track because much of LIFT's policy work in conflict-affected areas is likely to take place at the sub-national level, especially in areas controlled by ethnic armed organisations.

Policy indicator highlights

This section provides additional examples of policy achievements by LIFT FMO and implementing partners during 2019 that are not covered in the thematic chapters. These examples further illustrate LIFT's capacity to engage with a variety of stakeholders to address a wide range of policy issues. The examples presented here also showcase the different approaches and strategies that LIFT's Fund Management Office and IPs employ for effective policy engagement. Importantly, they highlight the important role that evidence plays in the policy process and effective ways that such evidence is disseminated to key stakeholders.

Table 4.2: Policy indicators according to IPs and FMO

| | changes in policy | changes in budget allocation | policy events | policy publications |
|--|-------------------|------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Agriculture, Markets & Food Systems | | | | |
| IPs | 1 | 1 | 0.7 | 0.92 |
| FMO | - | - | 0.3 | 0.08 |
| Decent Work & Labour Mobility | | | | |
| IPs | 1 | 1 | 0.87 | 0.89 |
| FMO | - | - | 0.13 | 0.11 |
| Nutrition | | | | |
| IPs | 0.83 | 1 | 0.7 | 1 |
| IPs & FMO | - | - | 0.06 | - |
| FMO | 0.17 | - | 0.24 | - |
| Financial inclusion | | | | |
| IPs | - | - | - | - |
| FMO | 1 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Gender | | | | |
| IPs | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| Social protection | | | | |
| IPs | - | - | 1 | - |
| Civil Society Strengthening | | | | |
| IPs | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| FMO | - | - | 1 | 1 |

Changes to public sector policies and programmes

Protecting domestic workers' rights through ending the prohibition on their migration and developing a national labour protection law.

An International Labour Organization (ILO) project in the Decent Work and Labour Mobility programme works to support full legal protection of domestic workers' rights in line with international labour standards, both in Myanmar and for migrant workers abroad. Policy advocacy strategies targeted a wide range of stakeholders, including building the capacity of the CSO and Labour Organization Network for Migrants, providing media interviews and publishing Op-Ed letters (jointly with LIFT), organising public debates and discussions, organising public events to celebrate International Domestic Workers day, forming a technical working group with Members of Parliament, developing a suite of knowledge products for stakeholder organisations and implementing a five-week training course for domestic workers to support skills recognition. This multi-pronged approach has led to two major policy outcomes in 2019: (1) The Cabinet lifted the ban on domestic workers migrating

overseas for work, allowing domestic workers to seek employment in Hong Kong, Singapore, Macau and Thailand, and (2) The Parliamentary Committee on Immigration, Local and Overseas Employment completed a draft bill on domestic work and has sent it to other committees and line ministries for comment. Further consultations will be organised to develop operational rules for recruitment and deployment of domestic workers and to review the draft law.

Lifting restrictions on foreign purchases of agricultural produce:

On 6 June 2019, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce lifted the restrictions on foreign companies purchasing rice, pulses and maize on local markets for export in value added form. Previously, only local companies were allowed to purchase agricultural commodities on the domestic market regardless of the form in which they were exported. Foreign companies could only purchase on an FOB⁸⁴ basis in foreign currency. Informed by its research on the pulses and beans value chain, the LIFT-funded Agri-food Value Chain Development in Myanmar project (AVCD) advocated with the Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and

⁸⁴ Meaning that the foreign companies are liable for goods that are damaged or destroyed during shipping.

Irrigation (MoALI) and the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) to allow foreign companies to purchase directly on local markets to: a) relieve liquidity constraints that lead to extremely low prices at harvest and b) facilitate export market diversification. Local companies strongly resisted these recommendations to open up the local commodity markets to foreign buyers. But with farmers facing depressed prices for pulses, maize and rice due to extended trade restrictions by India and China, the dam finally broke. This is the most significant change in agricultural trade policy since rice export market liberalisation. Impacts of the policy change will take time because foreign companies will first need to invest in processing facilities.

Changes to budget allocations

The **Network Activities Group (NAG)** implements the Improved Co-Management of Ayeyarwady Wetland Resources project targeting the co-management of fisheries and policy reform in the fisheries sector of the Delta. In cooperation with the Regional Department of Fisheries (DoF), NAG mapped 282 Inn areas in Pantanaw Township and in the process trained staff of the DoF on mapping and geographic information systems. In discussions with the Deputy Union Minister for the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI), the Ministry committed to extending the mapping area and the updating of Inn boundary demarcations using government resources. The Regional Government Land Use Department allocated MMK 164,450,000 (USD 108,000) to support the updating of Inn maps in the 2019/2020 budget. This is a significant development and clearly demonstrates that the work and approach developed by the project has relevance to the Myanmar Government.

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement (MSWRR) secured an increased allocation for cash transfers, for both MCCT and social pensions from the national budget for the financial year October 2019 to September 2020. The number of cash transfer recipients significantly increased from 227,508 to 403,779 within a year, almost doubling the number of those receiving cash transfers from the government budget in FY 2018-2019. The overall budget for cash transfers increased by over USD21 million, from around USD 22 million to more than USD 43 million. The increase is largely attributed to the government's coverage of MCCT beneficiary payments in Chin, Kayah, and Kayin States.

LIFT-supported policy-oriented events

VFV Land Law Amendment: LIFT FMO representatives along with LIFT's Fund Board Chairperson met with MoALI's Union Minister Dr. Aung Thun in January 2019. They discussed LIFT's concerns about the *Vacant, Fallow and Virgin Land*

Law amendment that was announced in October 2018. LIFT expressed its concerns about the potential criminalisation of people who could be accused of trespassing on land they considered theirs according to provisions in the amended version of the law. LIFT respectfully urged MoALI officials and relevant government stakeholders to actively consult with a broad range of civil society organisations (CSOs) throughout Myanmar on the issue.

Introducing LIFT to Parliament: On 5 September 2019, LIFT FMO representatives along with one Fund Board member met with the Chair and members of the Agriculture, Livestock, and Rural Development Committee, Farmer and Labour Affairs Committee, and Public Affairs Committee from the Lower House of Parliament. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce LIFT to Members of Parliament (MPs) and discuss ways for further collaboration. MPs raised a wide range of technical questions concerning LIFT's portfolio of project investments, including agriculture and rural development, nutrition, and gender equality. MPs requested LIFT to provide information about research findings and policy recommendations.

SUN Business Network (SBN): LIFT funded the establishment of the SBN that works across multiple sectors to promote private sector engagement in scaling up efforts to improve nutrition. The approach, aligned with government and civil society, consolidates efforts to strengthen the private sector's contributions towards improving the production and consumption of nutritious and safe food. The SBN is a platform for sharing knowledge and developing partnerships for advocacy. The SBN will focus on four main areas: 1) working with the private sector to develop fortified foods standards, production and consumption, 2) improving the enabling environment for food safety across the spectrum of agri-food supply chains, 3) supporting the role of the private sector in workplace health and nutrition, and 4) promoting nutrition awareness and education of businesses and consumers.

Fortified Rice: LIFT's National Policy Officer in Nay Pyi Taw helped organise the first advocacy meeting with parliamentary committees for PATH to present its fortified rice project and policy recommendations on 5 March 2019. The chairman and committee members from the Agriculture, Livestock, and Rural Development Committee attended the meeting. On 17 October, various stakeholders, including health officials and nutrition experts, met in Nay Pyi Taw to share insights about introducing fortified rice in Myanmar. This event marked an important milestone in developing rice fortification in Myanmar by handing the project over to the Ministry of Health and Sports (MoHS). It also enabled PATH to identify key lessons learned in a report that was shared with LIFT for publication.

MCCT Randomised Control Trial (Save the Children): The results from the randomised control trial in the Dry Zone were presented at an event in Nay Pyi Taw that included officials from MSWRR and MoHS, the General Administration Department (GAD), CSOs, UNICEF, the World Bank and other agencies that support the ambitious MCCT rollout by Government. The findings provided robust evidence specific to Myanmar about the transformative impact that combining cash with social and behaviour change approaches can have on stunting within a relatively short period of time. This event also provided an opportunity for decision makers and technical advisers to discuss how development partners can best support the scale up of the government's MCCT programme.

Agriculture Inputs: Recommendations from two white papers and a study prepared by the International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) were presented at a dialogue workshop titled *PPP, Role of Department of Agriculture (DoA) and Private Sector in the Delivering of Services to Farmers Workshop* in Nay Pyi Taw on 3 December 2019. The workshop was attended by the Chairman of the Agriculture, Livestock and Rural Development Committee, Pyithu Hluttaw, Chairman of the Farmer Affairs Committee, Amyothar Htuttaw, Director General of the Department of Agricultural Research, Director of the Department of Agriculture, Yezin University professors, the Department of Cooperatives, private sector representatives and farmers. Comprehensive discussions were undertaken on the role of the private sector and government line agencies in promoting good agricultural practices, including the safe use of crop protection products. Recommendations included restricting access to unsafe products and developing a service sector that provides relevant professional services.

Food Security Policy Research Data Analysis Workshop (AVCD): This workshop was convened at Yezin Agricultural University, Myanmar, in September 2019. The one-week outreach and capacity building workshop was organised to familiarise Myanmar policy makers, researchers and students from MoALI and Yezin with datasets collected over five years, and encourage participants to utilise the publicly accessible datasets and associated publications as a resource for their own teaching, information and research needs. Also in September, the AVCD team organised a workshop titled *Agriculture, Value Chains, and Rural Transformation in Myanmar*. Participants included government, policy makers, development partners and private sector participants. One discussion topic concerned what types of research were most relevant for informing policy debate, and how research findings can be effectively communicated to relevant stakeholders and policy makers.

Policy oriented publications supported by LIFT

Kayin State MCCT Policy Brief: CPI and Valid completed the MCCT baseline survey for Kayah State in 2019. The two organisations prepared a policy brief that included the following observations. Following one year of implementation, the MCCT programme coverage is 56 per cent for the whole state. Coverage of hard-to-reach areas and poor households was lower. Levels of child undernutrition are high across the state and highest in hard-to-reach areas and in the poorest households. Furthermore, households in hard-to-reach areas and poorest households are under-performing for all indicators, including access to health services, food security and access to WASH facilities. However, the high levels of child undernutrition found in Kayah State cannot be explained by food insecurity. It appears likely that the poor nutritional status of children is related to suboptimal young child feeding and breastfeeding practices, low coverage and access to maternal and child health services, and poor WASH services.

Filling the knowledge gap on brokerage services for migration in the Myanmar-Thailand corridor (IOM): Despite the existence of state-sanctioned formal migration channels, it is evident that many migrants engage with, and depend on, a range of brokerage practices that may involve both formal and informal actors. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) Twe Let project sought to obtain a better understanding of the role of brokerage infrastructure in Myanmar-Thai migration to develop interventions that are realistic and credible to their target communities. Dr Sverre Molland and Dr Victoria Jack of Australian National University, working in collaboration with Parami Development Network and Mon Women's Organisation, completed a participatory ethnographic evaluative research (PEER) study in Shan and Mon States in 2019. A key finding of the study is that migrants' decisions about how to migrate from Myanmar to Thailand is not a dichotomous choice between two distinct sets of pathways (i.e. regular, which is safe and orderly, and irregular, which is dangerous and exploitative). As such, it is essential that stakeholders comprehend the risks associated with both regular and irregular migration – including those that arise due to a lack of accountability and transparency regarding the roles of formal and informal intermediaries. With this improved understanding of the recruitment ecosystem, IOM can develop interventions based on awareness of the systemic challenges to safe migration caused by the existing migration infrastructure rather than a strictly individuated depiction of the problem.

LIFT's achievements under the policy engagement strategy and lessons learned

This section focuses on LIFT's achievements and lessons learned during 2019 according to the four components of the Policy Engagement Strategy (PES). These lessons will enable LIFT and its IPs to continue strengthening their respective capacities for policy engagement.

LIFT programming and policy engagement with government is strengthened

In early 2019, LIFT took a significant step toward strengthening its capacity for policy engagement with the Government of Myanmar by basing a National Policy Officer (NPO) in Nay Pyi Taw in January 2019. The NPO focused primarily on establishing and strengthening relationships with key Parliamentary Committees in both the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament. The NPO also established meaningful relationships to broaden LIFT's policy reach with development partners and key line agencies in government, as well as with research institutions and implementation partners active in Nay Pyi Taw.

LIFT's FMO convened several significant policy events with Members of Parliament (MPs) in Nay Pyi Taw. These included dissemination events for MPs and line agency officials for two LIFT-supported projects that were completed in 2019, the Village Development Planning (VDP) project and the World Bank's Farm Production Economic Study, Part 2. LIFT IPs also played important roles in policy engagement at the Union level. The policy highlights above provide several good examples of such engagement. Another good example concerns the Land Core Group's action regarding land tenure legislation.

Another important policy approach that LIFT actively pursued in 2019 concerns the deployment of embedded technical assistance to support programming and policy development, implementation, monitoring and reporting. For example, the Financial Inclusion Programme deployed an international expert to work in the Financial Regulatory Department in the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry. LIFT deployed a national and an international consultant to work with the Department of Social Welfare within the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement (MSWRR). LIFT also provided one national consultant to provide administrative and M&E support to the Department of Social Welfare in Chin State. During 2019, LIFT has provided three technical assistants to work with the National Nutrition Centre to support the implementation of the MS-NPAN. LIFT's support for the Michigan State University project will enable their policy expert to continue engaging with MoALI through 2021.

LIFT and its IPs also made significant advances in policy engagement at the sub-national level, including state/regions and township levels. For example, the first Annual Seed Fair took place in the Ayeyarwady Region in 2019 and was attended by the Chief Minister and his cabinet. NAG engaged with the Ayeyarwady Regional government on fishery laws. LIFT's national policy officer frequently engaged in social welfare discussions in Chin State, while LIFT programme officers for nutrition were actively involved in organising and facilitating MS-NPAN rollout at state/regional levels. As the government is prioritising the process of decentralisation, the role of state and region governments is expanding. For example, Chief Ministers now have the authority to regulate artisanal industries. Bottom-up planning will also be increasingly relevant to ensure that the government better responds to the needs of people at and communities at the local level.

Lessons learned

The recruitment and placement of the NPO in Nay Pyi Taw enabled LIFT to significantly "up its game" in policy engagement. Going forward, LIFT will continue to strengthen its policy presence in NPT.

Having a national programme officer based in a specific state or region enables LIFT to engage more closely and continuously with local government at both the state/region and township levels. A good example of this is the Delta programme where a locally-based national programme officer effectively coordinated with both IPs and regional officials. This approach is now being applied in Kachin State where a national programme officer is based. It will also be applied in the South-East.

LIFT will need to expand its capacity to analyse public financing and expenditures in order to more effectively advocate for sustainable policy interventions. Results suggest there is an imbalance between the number of laws and regulations that LIFT and its partners contributed to and the number of budget allocation changes they achieved. This suggests that LIFT and its partners should focus more attention on public financing and expenditures. LIFT should also devote more attention to a political economy analysis that identifies how power and resources are distributed and contested in different contexts, and the implications for development outcomes.

LIFT will need to expand its range of contacts with MPs and Parliamentary Committees in both the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament. During 2019, the National Policy Officer played a key role in establishing LIFT as an effective policy partner with Parliament. The initial focus during 2019 was on committees relevant to agriculture and rural development. In the next government mandate, LIFT

will need to engage with a broader range of MPs and committees relevant to LIFT programming interests, such as nutrition, public affairs, disabilities, and gender.

Knowledge and evidence management is improved

Strengthening institutional capacities for generating knowledge products with policy-specific applications will enable LIFT to better inform policy engagement and advocacy. Key sources of knowledge and evidence include lessons learned from project implementation at the ground level as well as monitoring reports, survey work and research findings. In 2019, LIFT's FMO and IPs produced a large volume of publications in the form of reports, briefs and other documentation. This number does not include mid-term reviews and final evaluations, nor does it include household survey reports.

The main mode of dissemination is through workshops and presentations to key stakeholders. For example, research findings from the IOM CHIME research were presented at a one-day workshop in Mandalay. GRET reported land tenure research findings to a group of MPs, CSOs, and MoALI officials in Nay Pyi Taw. Lessons learned from an evaluation of the Village Development Planning project were presented to a workshop that included development partners, INGOs, and local CSOs interested in decentralised governance reform.

A good example of how research findings can be used to inform policy concerns is the Agriculture Value Chain Development (AVCD) project. During the second half of 2019, LIFT and Michigan State University (MSU) began discussing a costed extension that would enable MSU to synthesise findings from research it had previously conducted along with international Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the Centre for Economic and Social Development (CESD). These synthesised research findings will help identify emerging trends in the rural economy about which MSU will then prepare policy recommendations for consideration by the next government.

A key challenge for LIFT is translating knowledge and evidence into policy tools such as briefs, research summaries, technical presentations and other forms of communication, such as videos, podcasts, and blogs. Increased coordination and collaboration across the FMO will help make methods and approaches for policy and advocacy more innovative. For example, the Communications Unit has initiated a bi-weekly *Voices from the Field* piece on the LIFT Website.

Lessons learned

The South-East call for proposals integrates references to policy and learning questions into the narrative. This approach enables LIFT to be more directive by better aligning programming implementation and policy engagement in the South-East.

LIFT programme officers are routinely engaged with implementing partners who are identifying important policy lessons through ground-level programme implementation. A key challenge is how to translate ground-level information into policy relevant evidence.

Government officials and MPs rarely have time to read long reports, especially those written in English. Many MPs may not have technical expertise in the fields for which they oversee. Briefings by LIFT's national programme officers and/or IP and CSO staff members could help make technical material more accessible to MPs. The LIFT NPO based in Nay Pyi Taw can help national programme officers to effectively engage with MPs.

Research projects should have from the outset a clear dissemination strategy for making policy-relevant research findings and recommendations available to well-defined audiences. The same principle should apply to mid-term reviews and final evaluations, as well as household surveys.

Partnerships and collaboration

The bulk of LIFT's policy engagement workload is undertaken by its implementing partners and CSO strategic partners. This suggests that LIFT's capacity to effectively influence policy depends largely on the strengths and capacities of its network of partnerships. LIFT's IPs are therefore a critical component of the LIFT's Policy Engagement Strategy. However, IP and CSO capacities for effective policy engagement vary across LIFT's programming portfolio.

A key objective for LIFT's FMO therefore is to help strengthen IP and CSO policy engagement capacities and practices, including monitoring and reporting. One approach is to convene regular community of practice workshops that bring IPs and CSO partners, as well as government partners, together to learn from one another by sharing lessons learned from their respective policy experiences.

During 2019, LIFT FMO successfully convened two such workshops. The first workshop was convened in April 2019 and focused on analysing policy processes at the Union level. The workshop was attended by 60 participants including IPs, CSOs, strategic partners from MoALI, Yezin Agricultural University, and DSW as well as LIFT FMO staff. Six partners were asked to present case studies of their respective policy interventions. These included APU/MoALI (Agriculture

Development Strategy); Gender Equality Network (Gender-Based Violence); HelpAge International (Social Pensions for the Elderly); ILO (Domestic Worker Protection); Land Core Group (National Land Use Policy); and PATH (Rice Fortification).

One of the main observations from this workshop was that these organisations all shared a passionate commitment to work for constructive change and contribute to Myanmar's social and economic development that is transparent, inclusive, and fair. Another observation was that policy work in Myanmar requires considerable effort to promote awareness and provide information to key stakeholders. In some cases, such as gender-based violence, it also requires efforts to change behaviours.

The second workshop was convened in December 2019 and also had about 60 participants. This workshop focused on a similar theme about lessons learned from policy engagement at the state/region level as well as township, and even community levels. As in April, seven partners were invited to present case studies of their policy engagement at the sub-national level. These included Social Policy and Poverty Research Group/SPPRG (Community-Based Disabilities, Sagaing); TRIP-Net (Advocacy on Indigenous Forestland Management, Tanintharyi); Network Activities Group/NAG (Freshwater Fisheries Laws); Oxfam and Land Security and Environmental Conservation Working group/LSECNG (Banana Plantations/Kachin State); Action Aid (Community-based Tourism, Magway Region); MS-NPAN/State and Region Roll Out; and Community Partners International (Health services in conflict-affected areas).

One key observation that emerged from the case studies was that successful policy engagement at the sub-national levels requires policy advocates to have a clear understanding of socio-economic and geo-political dynamics at ground level. In other words, context matters. Such an understanding is derived in part by analysing the political economy of a particular issue in a particular context while establishing trusted relationships with local communities.

This observation suggests that as LIFT aims to support more active policy engagement at the sub-national level, its partnerships with local CSOs will become increasingly important. Of particular importance are the Small Grants Funds that make much-needed resources available to local CSOs at community and township level for community organising and advocacy. This approach to supporting engagement at the local level will also be especially relevant in conflict-affected areas.

During 2019, LIFT worked to establish new relationships and bring other stakeholders together, including through 'think tanks'. For example, the NPO based in Nay Pyi Taw opened up communication channels with Michigan State University, IFPRI, and the government think tank, MDI, to help catalyse the creation of better policy products among research institutes. As a result of this initial intervention, these three organisations are now working together to develop lines of research that will better inform policy makers about the challenges and opportunities of agricultural value chains in Myanmar.

Relationships with the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) were established toward the end of 2019. LIFT and WFD held preliminary discussions about how the two organisations could collaborate to facilitate MP field visits to LIFT project sites. Possible project sites considered included MCCT, fortified rice, MFIs, and seed production.⁸⁵

Lessons learned

Three-year project implementation cycles are rarely in sync with policy and budget cycles. As part of its efforts to build IP capacities for policy engagement, LIFT's FMO needs to continue to help strengthen their practical and strategic understanding of policy and budget cycles.

A second component of the policy communities of practice focused on helping IPs improve their capacities to report on LIFT MEAL plans. LIFT FMO will use the next round to help new IPs learn about LIFT's MEAL plan practices. The addition of a monitoring and evaluation national staff position for policy will enable LIFT to better communicate with its policy partners about MEAL plan reporting.

Internal Communication and Coordination
Improving communication and policy coordination across the LIFT FMO as well as between the LIFT Fund Board and FMO will provide meaningful opportunities for strengthening LIFT's capacity to inform and influence policy in line with the policy vision in the strategy refresh. One step in this direction was taken in 2019 by creating working groups composed of FMO and FB members to focus on particular topics, including land tenure and labour migration.

Another approach for improving communication and coordination is to clarify LIFT's policy objectives. During the second half of 2019, the FMO's policy team met with each of the thematic programme and cross-cutting teams to identify and articulate policy objectives across all programming areas. As the socio-economic and geo-political context is highly dynamic, policy objectives may change over time.

⁸⁵ These discussions culminated in a Parliamentary field visit to Kaya State on 13-15 March 2020. The MP delegation visited MCCT beneficiaries and a village participating in the IFDC agriculture inputs projects.

A third approach is for the FMO to have a better understanding of the policy objectives of its Fund Board members. This will help ensure a greater complementarity of effort and help avoid working at cross-purposes. The Policy Unit aims to complete a series of discussions with FB members during the first half of 2020 to identify areas of synergies and complementarity.

Another good example of coordination within the LIFT FMO is the collaboration between LIFT's Civil Society Officer, the Rakhine programme team, and the LIFT NPO to jointly facilitate a Civil Society Organisations Conference and a series of consultation workshops in Yangon and Sittwe where the team presented LIFT's new strategy and gathered field inputs about ways LIFT could contribute to the livelihood improvement of the local population.

Policy engagement with Government

Agriculture Value Chain Development (AVCD) in Myanmar

The AVCD is jointly funded by LIFT and USAID and implemented by Michigan State University (MSU), the Centre for Economic and Social Development (CESD), and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). The overall goal of the project is to promote inclusive agricultural productivity growth, improved nutritional outcomes, and enhanced livelihood resilience for men and women through an improved policy enabling environment. The project comprises an integrated set of four components: (1) Policy/strategy advising; (2) Agrifood value chains (AFVCs) research; (3) Household and community livelihoods research; and (4) Capacity and network building. Some of the major achievements for 2019 including the following activities and publications:

Component 1: Advising on policy strategy

Implications for ADS and MS-NPAN from regional analysis of food consumption data:

Motivation for policy outreach on the role of agricultural research in supporting both the ADS and the MS-NPAN was provided by a draft report entitled [Household Dietary Patterns and the Affordability of a Nutritious Diet in Myanmar](#) by Kristi Mahrt (IFPRI) and David Mather (MSU).

Support to MoALI for an Agricultural Research Masterplan: A report on [Agricultural Research Capacity and Extension Linkages in Myanmar: Assessment and Recommendations](#) was prepared as a contribution to Pillar 2 of the Agricultural Development Strategy (ADS), focusing primarily on the Department of Agricultural Research (DAR). This report provided the evidence base to raise the development of a research master plan (the equivalent of an investment plan for the agricultural research system) to a core programme priority for the crop and irrigation sub-sector of the ADS.

Support to MoALI's Department of Planning: The AVCD project worked with the Agricultural Policy Unit (APU) to establish a programme of monthly talks when staff from all MoALI Departments can attend policy presentations and open discussions regardless of rank or status. The project also worked with the Department of Planning's (DoP) Director General to co-facilitate the crop and irrigation sub-sector working group of the Agricultural and Rural Development Sector Coordination Group (ARDSCG). The project assisted DoP in the preparation of a concept note proposal to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) of the Government of Korea for the establishment of a Myanmar Institute for Agriculture, Food and Rural Economy Policy in collaboration with the Korea Rural Economy Institute (KREI). The concept note was accepted for a feasibility assessment phase.

Component 2: Agri-food value chains and Component 3: Household and community livelihoods

Rural Economy and Agriculture Dry Zone Survey (READZ): The READZ household survey of 1,600 rural households was implemented in the Dry Zone in 2017. During 2019, two research reports were published. A journal article in the [Journal of Rural Studies](#), based on data from the READZ household and community survey was also published.

Shan Household Agriculture and Rural Economy Survey (SHARES): The Shan State Agriculture and Rural Economy Survey (SHARES) accounted for the major thrust of research undertaken during the first half of 2018. Two research reports and three research highlights were published during 2019.

SHARES Off-farm Value Chain Segment Looking Ahead Surveys: Off-farm value chain surveys were designed to complement the household component of the SHARES survey. During 2019, data from all surveys underwent analysis and two draft reports were prepared.

Other research outputs: A research paper on gender and assets in rural Myanmar was published. This paper draws on a review of the existing literature on gendered access to assets in rural Myanmar, and on qualitative and quantitative data. In this paper, AVCD explores the meaning and the extent of the gender gap in asset ownership in rural Myanmar, and the implications for policy.

Component 4: Capacity and network building

The ACD reported a total of 16 capacity and network building activities that were conducted in 2019. The events were directed at government stakeholders at national and sub-national levels, development partners such as USAID and DFID, and other organisations, including LIFT IPs. Topics included

aquaculture value chains as well as agriculture, land, and rural transformations, and related policy recommendations.

During the second half of 2019, LIFT's FMO worked with MSU and IFPRI to develop a costed extension that would enable the project to continue for another two years, through to 2021. The project will entail three workstreams: (1) Agricultural and Food System Analysis for Inclusive growth and Improved Nutritional Outcomes; (2) Preparation of an agriculture research and extension reform masterplan; and (3) Capacity Building for Applied Research and Analysis in Yezin Agriculture University and MoALI. One of the key deliverables from Component 1 concerns a set of policy recommendations that will be ready for the new government to consider in 2021.

Land tenure policy and legislation

LIFT's strategic partner **Land Core Group's** work on land governance contributed to the drafting of *National Land Laws* in 2019. The National Land Use Council announced the formation of working committees, advisory groups, and supporting units through official orders.⁸⁶ The formation of these entities included seats for CSO and farmer organisations. The establishment of these committees progresses the development of an umbrella land law and provides a platform for the ethnic minorities to contribute. Through the advocacy efforts of LCG and other CSOs, the Union Attorney General's (UAG) Office agreed to follow the National Land Use Policy guidelines in the formulation of the *National Land Laws*. At the request of the UAG, LCG facilitated a workshop on 20 December 2019 for the *National Land Law* Formulation and Law Harmonisation Working Committee and the working group supporting it to develop a road map. CSOs requested broader and more meaningful public consultations in the *National Land Laws* development.

Government enacted the *Land Acquisition, Reallocation and Rehabilitation Law* in August 2019. The Land Acquisition Act (India Act, 1894) was officially cancelled and replaced with new law. Parliament's consideration of the Farmland Laws amendment continued over the course of the year with a specific recommendation for an amendment to the Act that recognised shifting cultivation as a category of farmland. This and other amendments will be considered by the committee in 2020.

The Myanmar Government convened for the first time, a public wide consultation process for the drafting of elements of the *National Land Laws*. With technical support from LIFT's strategic partner LCG, the Forest Department organised public consultations around

the drafting of *Forest Rules* in 14 States and Regions that will lead to the implementation of the *Forest Law* (2018). Through these consultative processes recommendations were made by CSOs for changes in the draft *Forest Rules* that are currently under consideration by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation.

At the state/region levels **The Border Consortium (TBC)** through the STAND UP project is supporting the **Karen Environmental and Social Action Network (KESAN)** to strengthen the Karen Agriculture Department capacity to administer the Karen National Union's Land Policy. Through these efforts, land tenure security was strengthened for 19,000 individuals through the issuance of land use certificates supplemented by recognition from the Myanmar Governments farmland registration process.

LCG through its Strategic Partnership with LIFT, also supported the Yangon Regional Government in the formulation of the Yangon Land Use Council (LUC) and convened a multi-stakeholder workshop with representation from neighbouring States, Mon and Bago, to develop an environmental action plan.

Multi-sectoral National Plan of Action on Nutrition (MS-NPAN)

The **MS-NPAN** was endorsed in November 2018 by the Ministers from Health & Sport (MoHS), Education (MoE), Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement (MSWRR) and Agriculture Livestock and Irrigations (MoALI). Through collaborative efforts across multiple ministries with the support of multi-sector partners, donors and UN agencies, the MS-NPAN achieved a number of important milestones during 2019 under the leadership from the Minister of MoHS.

The inception phase 2019/2020 was resourced and staffed following a collaborative effort across many stakeholders in the nutrition sector. LIFT, in collaboration with Access to Health Fund supported the inception year through the funding of key members of the core team, mostly based in Nay Pyi Taw to support the National Nutrition Centre (NNC). The NNC and core team are working across ministries, with technical support from LIFT, Access to Health, UNICEF, the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) among others to develop the methodologies needed to carry out sub-national integrated nutrition plans.

In mid-2019, the process of sub-national level planning began with an initial workshop held in Nay Pyi Taw to familiarise representatives from all

⁸⁶ National Land Law Formulation (Drafting) and Land Management Laws Harmonization Committee [per NLUC. Order No. 3/2019. Dated: August 1, 2019], National Land Law Drafting Supporting Team [per NLUC. Order No. 4/2019. Dated: August 1, 2019], and the Technical Advisory Group [per NLUC. Order No. 2/2019. Dated: July 2, 2019]

states and regions with the MS-NPAN process, and garner commitment and support across multiple sectors. LIFT's FMO supported the first sub-national planning workshop in Ayeyarwady in August 2019, as well as many of the subsequent workshops. Based on lessons from this pilot exercise, a series of sub-national planning workshops were conducted in Kayah, Chin, Kayin and southern Shan States. The outputs of these workshops are multi-sector nutrition plans that are then costed and submitted to the respective State/Region Nutrition Promotion Committees for approval. The methodology that was needed for MoALI to play a role in the planning process required some additional design and LIFT supported a subsequent workshop in Ayeyarwady, specifically to allow the diverse departments in MoALI to undertake a more in-depth planning process.

Ministerial support for the MS-NPAN grew in 2019, as the Ministry of Natural Resources and Mining joined MoHS, MoALI, MoE and MSWRR as a fifth member of the MS-NPAN steering committee. Additional stakeholders also became more engaged in the process, including LIFT Fund Board members. Future plans to engage Parliamentary Committees, highlighting their crucial role in the sustainability of a multi-sector response to poor nutrition in Myanmar, will take place in February 2020. The General Administration Department and the Department of Finance and Budget were identified as having essential roles in delivering a successful multi-sectoral response to address malnutrition.

Concluding FMO policy-related projects

Two policy relevant projects focusing on policy research and rural development planning concluded during 2019.

Village Development Planning (VDP): LIFT FMO concluded its four-year collaboration with the Department of Rural Development (DRD) for the Village Development Planning (VDP) project at the end of March 2019. During the third week of March, the policy unit and VDP team organised several events at Union and State/Region Level to present lessons learned from the VDP project that LIFT had supported since 2015. The events were designed to reach specific audiences with information concerning both technical and policy matters. The union level event took place in Nay Pyi Taw with a gathering of approximately 50 parliamentarians. The VDP teams also made presentations at the regional level for government officials from MoALI, GAD, and regional MPs in Magway and Bago Regions. At these meetings, the VDP team presented key challenges and opportunities for sustainable scale-up.

LIFT's FMO organised a workshop with other development partners and implementing agencies working on local governance and/or village development planning. The team shared technical

and policy lessons learned from their respective implementation experiences. Implementing agencies also presented findings and observations from field research concerning local governance reform, including village development planning. These were lively discussions that highlighted the importance of understanding village planning is not solely a technocratic exercise, but also a social and political process.

World Bank Farm Production Economic, Part Two: LIFT concluded its policy research project with the World Bank in May 2019 with three dissemination events. In consultation workshops in Nay Pyi Taw researchers from the World Bank presented key findings and policy recommendations regarding farm economics. These presentations were treated as discussion opportunities to help validate survey findings. The policy team organised two events on 22 May. In the first event, the World Bank team presented key findings and policy implications to a joint meeting including officials from MoALI and Yezin Agriculture University (YAU). In the second event, the team presented key findings and policy implications to MPs from the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament.

One of the key messages from this research concerned the observation that during the period between the first and second surveys, Myanmar farmers in the four study areas had increasingly diversified crop production beyond rice and cereals. The researchers conclude that this represented an organic response to changes in consumer demand rather than a response to government policy initiatives. This suggests that implementation of the ADS needs to be more explicitly focused on crop diversification if public expenditures are to have any meaningful impact on supporting food diversification.

4.2 GENDER

Gender mainstreaming

Gender considerations intensified in 2019. Gender-responsiveness became a primary objective for LIFT under its refreshed strategy for the 2019-2023 phase. The commitment in the strategy is enforced by the incorporation of women's empowerment in agriculture index (WEAI) into LIFT's logframe and monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) plan. LIFT's monitoring and evaluation data sheets were updated to collect more gender-sensitive data from the projects and programmes in 2019.

Another approach taken to ensure gender mainstreaming in new projects was to allocate a minimum of 20 per cent of project's budgets to gender mainstreaming to encourage gender-sensitive project design.

An evaluative study on the gender strategy and its effectiveness for projects and programmes was initiated in late-2018. The findings of the study were expected to guide LIFT's future work on gender and to be used in revising LIFT's gender strategy and action plan. The evaluation team conducted field visits, key informant interviews and focus group discussions in the first half of 2019. The final report was submitted to LIFT in December 2019. Recommendations from the study included: 1) mainstream gender in future programming, including in the programmes in hard-to-reach and conflict-affected areas, 2) build capacity of FMO staff and implementing partners, 3) create a learning community on gender with a defined learning agenda and mechanisms, 4) clearly articulate both development and business cases for women's empowerment, and 5) address the unpaid care work of women in the intervention areas. Some of the recommendations were quickly adopted and others require LIFT to adjust gender targets. The Gender Action Plan developed in 2018 was revisited in late-2019 with inputs from respective gender focal points from programme teams.

LIFT assigned gender focal points within each of LIFT's programmes in 2017. They assess progress bi-annually with LIFT's gender officer on their programme's progress on the gender indicators. The gender focal points remain an important network across LIFT for ensuring gender mainstreaming in LIFT's work. A gender specialist was recruited in late-2019 to strengthen LIFT's capacity to provide technical support to programmes and projects. The LIFT Gender Strategy will be reviewed in 2020.

Highlights

LIFT programmes continued to make progress in 2019 in identifying approaches that improve gender equity and women's empowerment. Gender awareness and sensitivity in planning and implementation continues to increase. Programmes' and projects' efforts and achievements related to gender equity and women's empowerment are reported throughout the chapters of this report. Some highlighted examples follow.

Reducing gender imbalances for improving nutrition outcomes

Women's empowerment is central to building resilience and improving nutritional outcomes in Myanmar in the short and long term. The Myanmar Government developed *The National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women 2013-2022*, which seeks to empower women through promoting women's rights and establishing systems, structures and practices for the advancement of women, gender equality, and the realisation of women's rights.⁸⁷ Yet, despite several national policies to promote equality between men and women, inequalities persist, particularly in some ethnic groups. There is still much work to be done in many communities in Myanmar to elevate the status of women.

LIFT's Nutrition Programme works to empower women not only in terms of household and childcare practices, but also in understanding and addressing women's control over labour, time, land access, employment opportunities, expenditure, resource management, family planning and other determinants on the causal pathways for nutrition outcomes.

In Chin State, significant gender imbalances remain, particularly around women's voice and economic empowerment. Amidst rapid and ongoing changes in Myanmar's poorest state, well-designed interventions that reduce gender inequalities can have a significant impact on building resilience and improving nutrition outcomes in the long term. One such intervention is the PACE Project, implemented by CRS and KMSS. PACE adopted a gender-responsive programming approach, designing and implementing activities informed by the experiences of both men and women. This was accomplished by targeting women in all project activities, through engaging men and community leaders in dialogue around nutrition, and by encouraging husbands to take a more supportive role in on-farm and off-farm activities. Through a gender-sensitive behaviour change strategy, parents were taught how to ensure adequate maternal nutrition, practice of exclusive breastfeeding, and adequate complementary foods for children using locally available foods ensuring a diet optimal for malnutrition prevention.

A number of formative studies on gender have been conducted on beliefs and practices around culture, health, nutrition and these highlight gender barriers connected to women's equity in the household.⁸⁸ One of the gaps in formative literature, however, is women's role in value chain crops. To fill this gap, PACE conducted a gender value chain analysis to increase understanding of women's roles in the food production and value chains in Chin State and understand how best to leverage it in their project. Understanding how to empower women in rural contexts is critical, as projects aimed at increasing agricultural production can inadvertently add significantly to women's workload and time burden. Targeted interventions that are aware of, and respond to, women's work loads and other gender considerations can help prevent unintended negative consequences.

Published in 2019, the gender value chain analysis conducted by CRS in Chin State delivered a number of useful insights for gender-equitable livelihoods programming, highlighting that opportunities exist to increase women's knowledge and skills at all levels of the value chain, and especially in post-harvest work, where they predominate. According to the analysis, women have control over seeds (especially in gardens), labour (they are responsible for hiring labourers and negotiating prices), and market information (as they tend to be the ones who are home when vendors travel through the village). Any economic empowerment activities resulting in women's decreased home-based presence during the day, however, should consider and mitigate unintended consequences affecting their access to vendors and buyers, ability to find and hire labour, and availability for day-time trainings and workshops. Women's land ownership can be a catalyst for increased household nutrition, health, and well-being. However, the topic should be approached cautiously and with an understanding of its deep linkage to male identity. To make progress on structural barriers to gender equality, women's strategic needs, which include equal pay, land rights, egalitarian division of unpaid labor, and female ownership and sale of small animals needs to be addressed.

The gender analysis also found that though men maintain that they hold final decision-making power, in practice women and men often share decision-making responsibility. For instance, decisions around what to plant and how to use the money earned is often decided jointly. As women generally manage the money and are responsible for most day-to-day purchases, they often are the primary decision-makers, in practice. The analysis recommended that women were well placed for training on financial literacy, marketing, and entrepreneurship, though it is important to target women in the context of their

marital relationships to ensure the women have their husbands' support.

Supporting women to grow their involvement in agriculture

The Rice Seed Sector Development (RSSD) project in the Delta conducted a survey of 617 participants attending a Seed Fair in Pathein. The primary objective was to explore women's current situation, their future goals and their views on what they needed to improve their socio-economic status. Sixty-two per cent of the women were involved in farming or crop cultivation, 3 per cent were involved in poultry raising and fisheries, 15 per cent had their own small-scale agro-businesses and 17 per cent were confined to household activities. Key findings of the survey include:

- » 59 per cent of women agreed that over the past decade their socio-economic position has improved
- » 65 per cent requested training for their further advancement of their careers and socio-economic status, saying they felt "rudderless" to improve their situation
- » 29 per cent were looking for scholarship programs abroad, and 18.9 per cent requested English coaching
- » Only 6 per cent were interested in micro loans or other grants to start up small-scale businesses
- » 57 per cent said that they felt respected only at some places and sometimes and only 10 per cent felt they were respected at home or in the workplace.

The results are a concern from a gender equality perspective, as 93.4 per cent of the women who undertook the survey were graduates. While it is encouraging that women are completing basic and higher education, it raises many questions about social and cultural norms that limit women's opportunities to advance their socio-economic status.

In an attempt to address the gender imbalance in the rice seed sector, the Rice Sector Seed Development project expanded its co-investment model to support 10 female seed growers. Participants in the scheme developed business plans to support the expansion of their seed enterprises that included the construction of warehousing facilities, acquiring tillage equipment etc. Grants of USD 5,000 were provided on condition that the recipient matched the investment with a minimum of 20 per cent of the value through their own contributions.

The Linking Laputta to Markets project in the Delta works to improve women's involvement and decision making in the male-dominated rice value chain.

The farmer producer enterprises supported by the project strive for at least 30 per cent of women contributing to the management of farmer-based organisations. The reported percentage of female committee members is now 27 per cent.

Equipping women for safe migration

In the skills training component of the Linking Laputta to Markets project, mechanics and construction courses are almost exclusively male dominated and garment industry courses are mainly, but not exclusively, taken up by women. Training in the hospitality/hotel sector is targeted at men and women. The project is working to identify some champions to challenge these gendered social norms. Currently, among the 1,542 who have graduated since the start of the project, 29 per cent are women. The project has continuously attempted to resolve the challenge of migration for female graduates who find it a more challenging and riskier prospect than men due to issues of separation from children or childcare responsibilities, pregnancy, access to medical services, risk of abuse, and other protection and well-being issues. The project is addressing this in life skills training and by building linkages with organisations and initiatives focusing on safe migration, women's rights, and workers' welfare organisations.

Changing attitudes to gender-based violence

To respond to the critical need of protecting women migrants from gender-based violence and sexual harassment, CARE implemented an extensive programme of awareness-raising, capacity building and response mechanisms. A total of 15,826 people were reached through trainings, workshops and special events within communities. In order to encourage positive contributions from men in addressing gender-based violence in their communities, CARE organised 24 'Engaging Men Trainings'. Participants shared their own experiences of the negative consequences of gender-based violence (GBV) and identified ways they could help with changing the attitudes and behaviours that contribute to violence. One participant said: "After attending the training and becoming a member of a GBV response group, I became more aware of GBV and stopped being abusive towards my own family". Progress on addressing harassment within the workplace was also achieved, with trainings of management and human resource staff at 13 factories leading to committees for prevention and response to sexual harassment being established.

People with disabilities and gender-based violence

The Improving Socio-Economic Situation of persons with Disabilities project in northern Shan State, learned that gender-based violence was experienced by women and girls with disabilities who have lived through a prolonged and active conflict situation. The cultural norms and beliefs make it harder for the victims and survivors of gender-based violence

to access proper care and support. The women with disabilities chose to not seek support due to stigma and discrimination they feared within their communities. In response, the project adopted a simple approach of recruiting and training female staff on gender equality and gender-based violence issues so they could approach and provide support to the women with disabilities who had experienced gender-based violence. Recruiting women with disabilities into the project team and also onto the organisation's board improves the project's ability to consult, plan, and support the women with disabilities.

LIFT plans to conduct an evaluation for the Disability Programme in 2020. The evaluation will include a gender lens and findings will inform future programming on disability.

The 2019 achievements of LIFT's Strategic Partner, the Gender Equality Network (GEN), are presented in the Civil Society Strengthening chapter of this report.

4.3 CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTHENING

Civil society in Myanmar rapidly evolved after the 2010 election and contributed to the country's democratic transformation. Support and funding for local CSOs helps build their capacity to play their roles in communities' social change. Since its inception, LIFT has worked with civil society partners in its effort to bring about rural poverty reduction through livelihood and food security-related programmes. LIFT works with national-level CSOs through strategic partnerships, with township-level CSOs through the small grants funds and with grassroot-level CSOs and CBOs on various projects. In 2018, LIFT's Fund Board decided that a minimum of 20 per cent of all funding windows from 2019 would be ring-fenced for CSO partners.

In early 2020, some CSOs described a "shrinking space" for CSOs, particularly at the national level, and a shift in focus of CSO to the state/regional level. They also said that funding for CSOs was diminishing.

LIFT continuously tracks the share of its total funding that is directly managed by CSO and in 2019 this was 16 per cent.

In 2019, LIFT's Civil Society Strengthening Programme published the studies LIFT conducted to understand how CSOs managed their indirect costs. A significant number of CSOs receiving funding from the township-

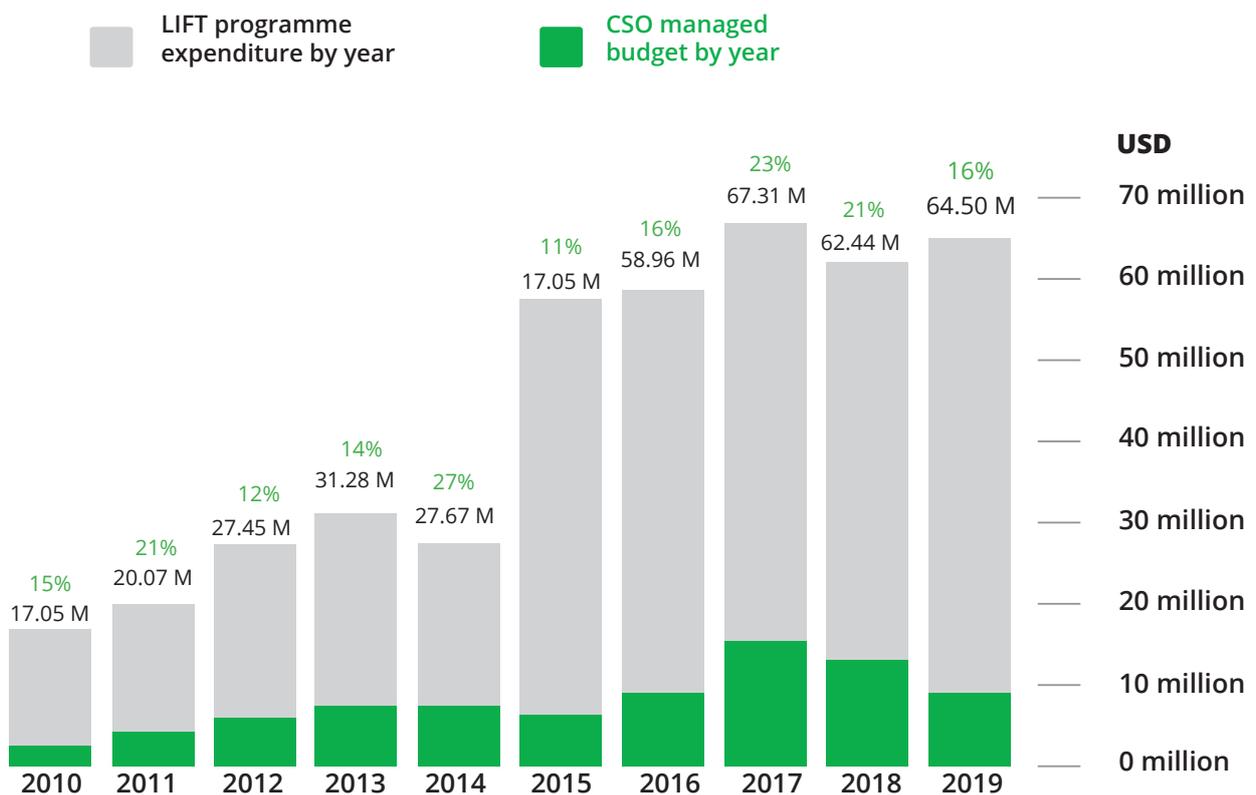
level small grant funds established by LIFT in 2016/17 were able to recover some of the indirect costs for the first time. LIFT conducted surveys with these CSOs in 2018 to learn how they allocated this income, what their priorities were with unrestricted income and what the implications were for institutional donors. LIFT organised a Civil Society Research Forum titled *Understanding Indirect Costs and Strengthening Civil Society* on 30 April 2019 at the Novotel Hotel in Yangon, which was attended by around 130 people from LIFT's small grant fund teams, grantee CSOs, strategic partner organisations, representatives from LIFT's donor agencies, INGOs and LIFT's other grant holders.

Panel members at the forum discussed the findings from the study and heard that the allocation of funding for indirect costs played a crucial role in building CSO organisations and contributing to their sustainability.

"Indirect Costs are very important. Over time, donors become more project-oriented. Networks like CSO have unexpected and emergency costs. Having indirect costs means our networks can respond to immediate issues. It helps build the sustainability of the networks." : CSO panel member speaking at the forum.

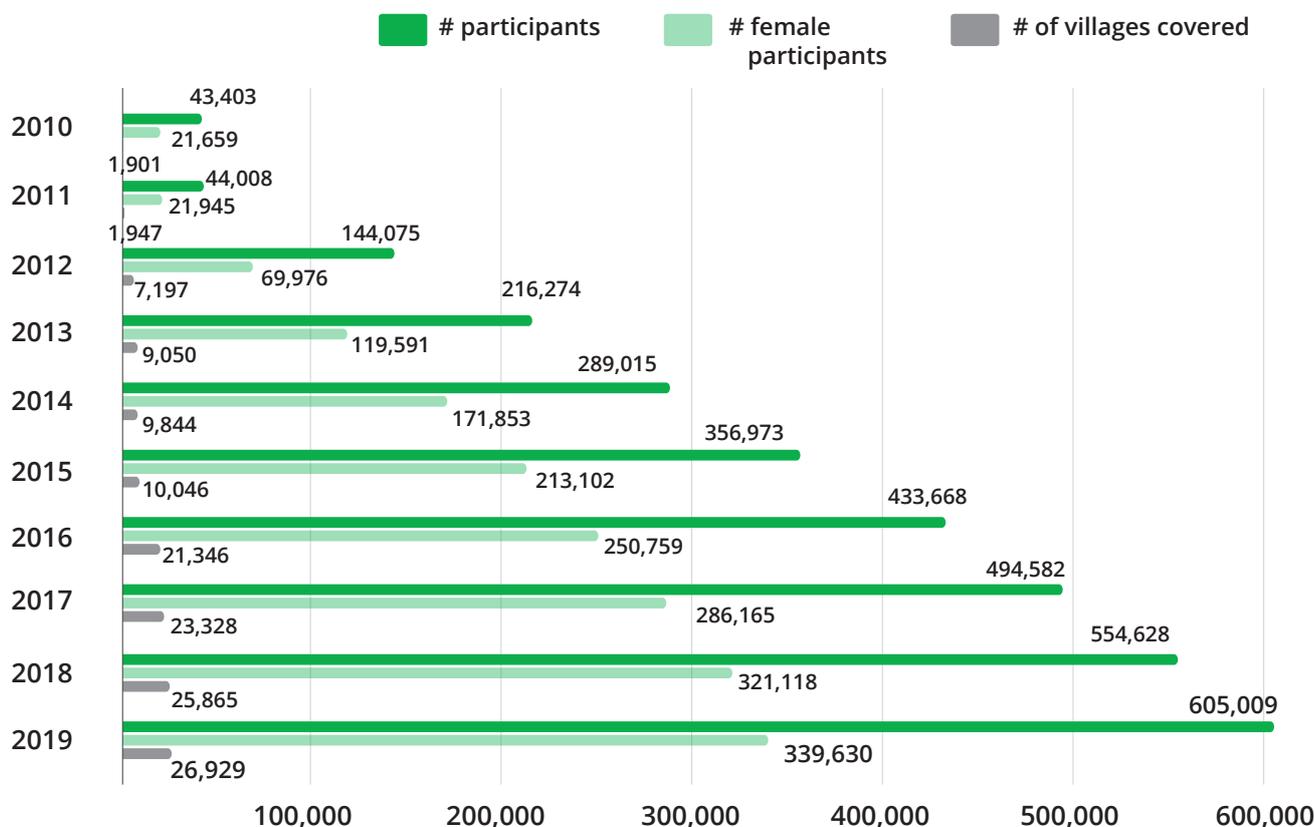
The Indirect Costs study report is available on LIFT's website <https://www.lift-fund.org/civil-society-organisations-and-indirect-costs-myanmar>

Percentage of LIFT funding granted for Myanmar CSO



LIFT’s partners conducted capacity building trainings with CSOs in 2019. Cumulative trainings to December 2019 are shown in the following graph.

Cummulative training achievements from year 2010 to 2019



Small Grants Funds

Since 2017, LIFT has supported township-level civil society organisations through its small grants funding mechanism to facilitate coordination among local authorities, the private sector, and local civil society. The small grant funds livelihood system strengthening model funded by LIFT operated in the Ayeyarwady Delta, Dry Zone and the Upland areas in Chin, Kachin, Shan, and Kayah States.

The funds in the Dry Zone and Delta concluded their projects by the end of September 2019 and the total number of grants distributed to township-level CSOs are shown in Table 4.3.

Civil society’s engagement with the local authorities

LIFT’s programme promotes a livelihood system in which the private sector, local authorities, and civic actors work together to strengthen the whole

Table 4.3 Number of grants distributed to township level CSOs

| Small Grant Funds (SGF) | Special grant | Project grant | CRG*grants | FAA** grants | Core grants | Seed grants | Opportunity grants | Total |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|------------|
| Delta SGF | 20 | 50 | | | | | | 70 |
| Dry Zone SGF | | | 86 | 37 | | | | 125 |
| Upland SGF | | | | | 104 | 16 | 27 | 143 |
| Total | | | | | | | | 340 |

*Cost reimbursement grants

**Fixed amount awards

township's livelihood scheme. LIFT funds CSOs in 32 townships of Delta, Dry Zone, and Upland areas. In the past, during the military regime's rule all levels of government were reluctant to work with civil society. Now, government authorities, particularly the General Administration Departments, have become open to working hand-in-hand with civil society for livelihood development with CSOs in the townships where LIFT's small grant funds operate.

Through the systems approach, the Uplands Township Fund has made significant progress over three years in establishing civil society's relationships with other township stakeholders, and in increasing the capacity and confidence of civic actors. The fund's quantitative data shows that 64 per cent of their small grantees have 'significantly increased' their engagement with, and recognition from, local authorities and community stakeholders. CSOs feel more confident and feel they had "claimed space" in their communities.

In all five areas of the Uplands Township Fund - Chin, Kachin, northern Shan, southern Shan, and Kayah States - relationships and coordination between CSOs also improved. Regular meetings between civil society groups were occurring in 13 townships and more formal township-level CSO networks were operating in 10 townships. More than 90 per cent of the fund's grantees felt they now had stronger linkages with other civil society actors in their township. The majority of CSO grantees also assessed that they had improved their capacities since the beginning of their engagement with the fund, and 80 per cent said it was due to trainings and experience gained implementing activities as a result of the grants.

In Salin Township in Magway Region, 30 CSOs organised monthly meetings to discuss health, education, and other township affairs. They jointly advocated to the township authorities to grant ambulance licenses for emergency medical transportation. They also liaise regularly with the police, General Administration Department and Health Department.

The Organic Farming Organization (OFO) linked with the Food Security Working Group (FSWG) and NAG, attended agricultural trainings and forums, learning about new technologies related to farming.

In the Dry Zone regional CSO network meeting, 38 CSOs (46 per cent) reported networking with government departments and engaging in collective activities with others, including NGOs like Help Age International, Action Aid, Capacity Building Initiative, Save the Children, Local Resource Center (LRC), Paung Ku, NAG, and Partners Asia, and the private sector. They engaged on a range of topics, including child rights, capacity building, trade fairs and market linkages, disaster risk reduction awareness, new proposal development processes, World

Environmental Day and farmland law amendment processes.

Civil society's engagement with the local private sector

Almost 30 per cent of the Uplands Township Fund CSO grantees feel they have stronger connections with private sector organisations, such as Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producer and Exporter Association (MFVP), Myanmar Tea Cluster, Myanmar Organic Growers, and Producers Association and Myanmar Rattan and Bamboo Entrepreneurs Association. The CSOs have worked with these organisations to provide farmers and producers with market information, technical training support, exposure trips for farmers and development of market linkages between farmers and traders. Farmers of tea, vegetables, avocado and potato in southern Shan, and rice, corn, vegetables and livestock in Kayah, Kachin and Chin States have benefitted. Some farmers groups established value-added production and collective selling arrangements that allowed them to sell to markets with better prices.

In 2019, 49 exposure and learning trips for farmers were conducted in Upland areas with the support of CSOs receiving grants from the Upland Township Fund. Through these visits farmers developed market linkages and learnt about good agricultural practices for crops including rice, soybean, corn, tea, avocado, elephant foot yam, potato and vegetables. Farmers learned about organic crops, seeds, farming inputs and bamboo products.

Local owners of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SME) were involved in assessments of SME support and loans from the government SME Development Department in Kayah, Pindaya and Chin. These CSOs organised SME loan system review meetings with the private sector and used the analysis to request the government's SME Development Department to change the loan procedures to better meet local businesses requirements. Upland Township Fund grantees prioritised the issues. In Chin State, CSOs' consultation with SME members resulted in the State Parliament's approval of a budget for SME loans.

Gender Equality Network (GEN) signed a partnership agreement with the Business Coalition for Gender Equality (BCGE), a coalition of companies that are committed to promoting gender equality in the workplace in Myanmar. Founding members from the commercial sector include First Myanmar Investment Co., Ltd, City Mart Holding Co., Ltd, Kanbawza Group of Companies, Shwe Taung Group, Ayeyarwaddy Bank Ltd and Parami Energy Group of Companies. GEN aims to promote the gender-related capacity of the BCGE through delivering workshops and trainings.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING JUMPSTARTS ONE FAMILY'S LUCRATIVE NEW BUSINESS



Photo: Ma Nu and her husband make cement blocks as a part of their lucrative new construction material business in Ya Da Nar Pon village, Mandalay Region.

"I attended a machine weaving training conducted by Shwe Nyar Thu to learn weaving techniques. I learned new weaving skills and am now receiving a regular income from my weaving. Because of this training, I am working towards my future dream of buying a loom in the coming year to further improve my livelihood."

– Daw Aung Kyi, Shwe Nyar Thu Women's Self-Reliable Group, Shwe Dar village, Pakokku Township

Ma Nu lives in Ya Da Nar Pon village in Taungtha Township, Mandalay Region. One-quarter of the village tract's population is unemployed. Ma Nu and her husband worked as casual laborers and earned MMK 3,000 (USD 2) per day. Agricultural casual work was sporadic.

With funding from the LIFT Dry Zone Small Grants Fund, the Yadanar Pon Parahita Social Welfare Association offered vocational skills training on welding, cement brick making, and livestock breeding to low-income families from four villages in the tract. Ma Nu attended a month-long cement brick making training.

"As soon as I finished the training, I started making cement bricks. My husband and I now also produce other construction materials, such as decorative cement blocks and cement block pillars. We source the raw materials for the work, such as sand and water, from throughout our community," Ma Nu said.

"As a result of our new work, my husband and I each earn MMK 15,000 (USD 10) per day. Our family's income has improved, and we now have regular jobs so we do not worry about being jobless. In addition, the construction business is more convenient and less costly than the work we used to do."

Civil Society's engagement with donors

Involvement with the small grants funds resulted in increased capacity of CSOs to seek funding from other organisations. With the support of the Delta Small Grant Fund funded by LIFT, CSOs attempted fundraising from other donors and 21 of the 40 attempts to attract funding were successful.

Civil Society and vocational trainings

Vocational training is an activity CSOs engage in with their small grants.

In Kachin, northern and southern Shan States, vocational training has resulted in trainees producing and selling traditional weaving and bamboo handicrafts in local and national markets.

In the Dry Zone, the Small Grants Fund enabled vocational training opportunities that are leading to small self-owned businesses and providing local employment opportunities. These businesses are using local trademarks and locally available raw materials and are fulfilling market demand for certain products.

Strategic partnerships

LIFT has long-term strategic partnerships with Food Security Working Group (FSWG), Gender Equality Network (GEN), Land Core Group (LCG), Karuna Mission Social Solidarity (KMSS), Network Activity Group (NAG) and Metta Development Foundation to build the institutional capacity of the national-level CSOs and support their strategic level policy advocacy on different thematic areas.

Gender Equality Network (GEN) has been working to achieve gender equality in Myanmar for over a decade.

In 2019, GEN advocated for the Ministry of Information (MoI) to mainstream gender in the state-owned media and for the dissemination of information related to violence against women and gender-based violence. GEN also worked with the Ministry of Education on gender mainstreaming in the education sector and to ensure gender and social inclusion were considered in academic curriculum development.

GEN proposed a research study on gender-based violence to the Ministry of Home Affairs. GEN proposed conducting the research with people who have been convicted of gender-based violence offences to gather evidence from perpetrators that can inform improvements to the gender-based violence response in Myanmar.

GEN also worked with the Ministry of Health and Sports (MoHS) on disseminating gender-based violence guidelines to health service providers to improve survivor-centered service provision at the health facilities.

In 2019, at the national level, GEN co-chaired two technical working groups - gender mainstreaming and violence against women and girls- of the Myanmar National Committee for Women. GEN has been an active member of the committee since 2017. GEN is facilitating the national work plan development for both technical working groups, which will feed into the national work plan for implementation of the *National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women 2013-2022 (NSPAW)*.

GEN continued its advocacy efforts for the passage of the *Prevention and Protection of Violence Against Women Law* in 2019 and chaired the Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process.

Civil society and nutrition

Karuna Mission Social Solidarity (KMSS) conducted a nutrition survey with 938 households in three areas, covering 12 camps for internally displaced people, in the government-controlled areas and non-government-controlled areas. This formative study will deliver better understandings of the nutritional status of people in camps in Kachin and northern Shan States especially of children aged under 5 years and pregnant and breastfeeding women. The report was published in May 2019.

Civil Society and policy advocacy

Strategic partners of LIFT are working together in some areas where their strategies overlap. Land Core group's (LCG) Advocacy and Networking Program Officer provided training on the process of obtaining Form 7 and vacant, fallow and virgin (VfV) land documentation for IDPs, in conjunction with KMSS Bhamo. KMSS had shifted its focus from community development to helping communities get Form 7. They were able to help farmers obtain Form 7 without paying officials, which farmers had been asked to do before. LCG's Advocacy and Networking Programme Officer also gave training on customary tenure documentation and land registration through the government system to farmers in Bago, in conjunction with Gaia Sustainable Movement Institute (GSMI) Taung Gyi and GSMI Kyauk Gyi. GSMI has now been working on the land (especially community mapping) and were able to help communities produce customary tenure maps.

LCG is also placing emphasis on civil society engagement at the sub-national level by learning and working with CSOs rather than relying on top-down funding. They are also encouraging governments to meet with a broader range of CSOs. In the first half of 2019, LCG's Advocacy and Networking Program Officer facilitated several region-level CSO meetings in Bago and Ayeyarwaddy Regions to plan regional-level advocacy activities.

LCG is convinced that there is evidence of some government actors being more willing to consult with civil society than before. One example was that during some of the consultation workshops on the draft Forest Rules, organised by LCG and others, Forest Department officials seemed willing to accept even negative comments from community leaders and CSOs and did not try to interfere with CSOs sharing their opinions. The FD allowed a participatory process in two expert roundtables to determine how each comment was dealt with, and these decisions were carried through into the final draft that the FD submitted to the Union Attorney General office. Two FD officials and two officials from the Department of Agricultural Land Management and Statistics, in particular, showed a particularly positive change in this regard.

In the first half of 2019, Metta developed a construction design for an agroecology centre in Taungyi, Southern Shan where there is a greater need for farming and vocational skills in agriculture creating an opportunity to establish research and training centre. Detailed construction costs have been calculated with the technical assistance of a local architect who specialises in agro-ecological design and buildings. In early December, Metta procurement team has announced tender for construction of the centre and selected three construction companies. The construction of three buildings will start in January and end in June 2020. Metta also organised a learning visit to Vietnam for Yezin Agriculture University personnel, farmers, and government representatives.

The Minister of MoALI, Bago Region requested support in developing the Agricultural Strategic Plan (2020-2025) for the region. The Food Security Working Group (FSWG) provided technical and financial support and coordinated with government officials from 10 government departments and the Minister to discuss strategic plan formulation. The work began in May 2019 and will finish in September 2019.

FSWG also worked with the Forest Department to revise and amend village firewood plantation laws and rules in accordance with the current reform process. At a three-day workshop in May in Yangon FSWG and government representatives agreed to develop models for the laws and rules.

Through the Improved Co-Management of Ayeyarwady Wetland Resources (ICAWR) project, NAG provides support to fishery groups interested in applying for permission to operate fishing tenders through co-management associations. NAG's Capacity Building Coordinators facilitate and strengthen links between the Fisher Development Associations (FDA) and the Department of Fishery (DoF). The Project Coordinator, Advocacy and Communications Coordinator and Capacity Building Coordinators meet regularly with

the Regional, District and Township level Department of Fisheries officers to facilitate smooth processes and community access to the proposed fishing grounds at the floor price.

Looking ahead

Two of the small grants funds closed in 2019. Only the Upland Township Fund continues.

The strategic partnership with the Food Security Working Group ended in December 2019. The other five strategic partnerships continue.

With more projects in conflict-affected areas being supported, staff from LIFT's partner organisations need to be aware of the accountability practices. Therefore, LIFT is organising a series of accountability training sessions for staff members of its partner organisations in 2020. The series will cover:

- » Accountability and good governance
- » Self-assessments
- » Complaints and response mechanisms for prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse
- » Do No Harm
- » Financial and management accountability

LIFT will continue its support to strengthen civil society using approaches and technical assistance based on its lessons learned. This will include support for civil society organisations to effectively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

4.4 SOCIAL PROTECTION

Social pensions

The Government of the Union of Myanmar expanded its coverage of social pensions for the elderly during 2019 by 15 per cent. By December, almost 200,000 people aged over 85 years were receiving social pensions from the government.

Since 2014, LIFT has funded HelpAge international to provide close technical support to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MSWRR) to help develop and implement the social pension programme, a key component of the government's National Social Protection Strategic Plan (NSPSP). This work continued in 2019.

To strengthen the national social pension delivery system, HelpAge International collaborated with the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) to conduct and analyse a series of studies.

One study, *Analysis on the Relationship Between Social Protection and National Cohesion and Reconciliation (Myanmar)*, explored how social protection can further the government's aims related to national reconciliation and peace. A key feature of social protection that can support cohesion is universalism, which the Government of Myanmar has adopted. By reaching everyone – regardless of religion, ethnicity, gender or area of residence – a universal, national scheme stresses the concepts of unity, social cohesion and equal access.

HelpAge International completed a study titled *The National investigation of Social Pension Delivery Challenges* DSW's efforts to improve local delivery of social pension operations and reduce exclusion error. Another study, *Roles and Responsibilities of Social Protection in Myanmar: The Case of Social*

Pensions analysed the respective roles, challenges and opportunities at the sub-national level for developing and delivering social protection measures, with a focus on the social pension, over the medium-term future. The study recommended that DSW take advantage of the growing investment in social protection and the opportunities created by decentralisation.

HelpAge International also provided technical support for improved delivery through systems improvement, particularly the social pension database, and helped DSW develop and distribute *Local Implementation Guidelines for Delivery of Social Pension* to all ward and village tract offices throughout the country.

Disability

During 2019, LIFT contracted four projects on disability across six states and regions.

Disability awareness raising

People with disabilities often face discrimination and exclusion by the community due to a lack of knowledge in communities related to disability. Disability awareness training and workshops were conducted with different actors in all project areas including people with disabilities, their household members, communities and government staff. More than 13,500 people (56 per cent women) participated and discussed disability rights and laws, disability inclusion, mainstreaming and livelihood opportunities for people with disabilities. Participants learned of the needs and capacities of people with disabilities, amplified their voice, and increased their participation in community decision making. The Department of Rural Development (DRD) in Budalin Township adapted the disability-friendly design of three community halls in the project area that will be built with Mya Sein Young (MSY) funds.

| Implementing Partner | State/Region | Township | #village/ward | # PwD |
|--|---------------|---|---------------|-------|
| Eden Centre for Disabled Children | Chin | Mindat, Matupi, Teddim, Falam, Hakha, Thantlang | 78 | 2037 |
| Golden Pearl | Northern Shan | Lashio, Kyaukme, Hseini | 90 | 740 |
| Help Age International | Kayin | Hpa Pun | 30 | 372 |
| Help Age International | Mandalay | Myingyan, Ngahtogyi | 140 | 2985 |
| Help Age International | Magway | Pakokku, Yesagyo | 60 | 1256 |
| Social Policy and Poverty Research Group | Sagaing | Budalin | 20 | 438 |

Access to essential social protection services for vulnerable households with persons with disabilities

People with disabilities and their households are vulnerable and often have limited access to social services and the capacity to cope with health emergencies. In 2019, LIFT-funded projects implemented interventions to increase the accessibility of social services to people with disabilities and their households.

In 2019, 282 disability-inclusive community-based organisations (CBOs) were formed and supported across five states and regions (Chin, Kayin, Magway, Mandalay, Sagaing) by four of LIFT's implementing partners. The purpose of the organisations is to increase access for people with disabilities to social protection services. They also act as a change agent in communities to increase participation of people with disabilities in community life and reduce discrimination and exclusion. These organisations received training in organisational development including fund management, monitoring and formulating community action plans. Training was also delivered on nutrition, disability and elderly care. The social protection community action plans cover nutrition support, elderly home care, education support for disabled children, disabled-friendly lane and hardship support, were developed with inputs from the community and led by the CBOs' working committee.

To ensure the sustainability of the CBOs, the community social protection fund (CSPF) was supported and managed by the CBO's working committee. The CSPF provides revolving, low-interest (2-3 per cent) loans to the households based on their vulnerability and support to people with disabilities and their households for establishing livelihood activities. The majority of loans were provided to the most vulnerable households, with the payback period ranging from three to six months. Half the interest was reinvested in the revolving fund to support future loans, and the other half put into the CSPF and used to implement the social protection community action plan. In 2019, 40 CBOs from Sagaing, Mandalay and Kayin were supported to establish CSPF by HelpAge International and the Social Policy and Poverty Research Group.

Additionally, one-off emergency grants were provided to households, often used for medical emergencies. In 2019, Golden Pearl and HelpAge International provided emergency support to 2,415 people with disabilities and their PwD households through both the one-off emergency grant and low-interest loans from village community social protection funds. The funds have enabled people to increase their resilience and maintain their dignity and well-being in the face of setbacks.

To improve people's mobility and support their independence, LIFT-funded projects distributed 606 assisted devices and were trained on how to use them by the Social Policy and Poverty Research Group (SPRRG) in Sagaing and by HelpAge International in Mandalay and Magway Regions. Additionally, 204 people with disabilities from Sagaing Region received personal rehabilitation plans from SPRRG to help improve their mobility. Of the 204 people, seven improved their self-care, 121 improved their posture, 95 gained muscle power and 12 were able to deal with phantom pain.

Improving livelihood opportunities

People with disabilities often lack access to livelihood opportunities due to their limited mobility and resources. To overcome these challenges and improve people's livelihoods opportunities market assessment workshops were organised to identify possible livelihood opportunities for people with disabilities. Once opportunities were identified, training was provided to people with disabilities. In 2019, almost 300 people and their household members attended vocational and livelihood training provided by HelpAge International, Golden Pearl, and the Eden Center for Disabled Children. Training delivered included: basket making, weaving, joss stick making, shampooing, hair cutting, snack making, and phone repairing. Among the training participants, 57 people with disabilities and their household members also received livelihood grant support to increase their household income in 2019. These grants were provided by Golden Pearl and Help Age International in northern Shan State, Mandalay and Magway Regions.

Electronic cash transfer pilot

The Government's social protection cash transfers are currently delivered in person, which is labour intensive and creates risks of leakage and delayed payment. HelpAge International's Inclusive Social Protection and Livelihood Project (SPLP) piloted electronic cash transfers to people with disabilities in Mandalay, Magway and Kayin. The purpose of the pilot was to (1) provide an unconditional source of income to strengthen people's social security, and (2) test the potential to expand the electronic modality across Myanmar in line with DSW's plan to deliver 40 per cent of social pensions electronically by 2023. The project coordinated with DSW and the township-level General Administration Department (GAD) for the registration and cash transfer process. GAD officials were also involved in distributing cash transfers. Community volunteers were trained to support recipients and act as a feedback mechanism between people with disabilities and project staff.

An interesting spill over effect was observed: community members who supported people to receive transfers learned new technical skills relating to the use of mobile technology. In total, payments were made to 4,613 people with disabilities (54 per cent women). People now travel to pay points to collect cash themselves or arrange for a proxy to do so and their participation in the process is increased.

Policy influence

HelpAge international's community-based organisation model of inclusive self-help groups was designed and piloted in the project areas of Mandalay Region with inputs from DSW. In 2019, DSW adopted the model and will replicate it as part of the the model as part of the National Social Protection Strategic Plan.

The SPRRG project specifically worked with the Department of Rural Development (DRD) at state and township levels to mainstream disability in the rural development initiatives through capacity building, practical experiences with project staff, and continuous advocacy at the state and local levels. As a result of the engagement, DRD has integrated the disabled-friendly infrastructure designs for community town halls and renovated existing infrastructures to be disabled friendly.

Lessons learned

People with disabilities are one of the most vulnerable groups for domestic violence, gender-based violence, and sexual abuse. There are strong linkages between gender-based violence, sexual abuse and disability, especially in areas affected by armed conflict. LIFT's implementing partners have limited experience and capacity in managing such cases and need to coordinate with the DSW and women's organisations in the area for referral and essential services.

Another issue concerns the misunderstanding of the meaning of disability by village and township level authorities who assume that people with no visible physical disability and those who could work were not 'disabled'. Disability issues are not commonly discussed in communities and the social and human rights model and approaches to disability and inclusion is very new to the communities. The communities are more familiar with the charity approach to disability where people with disabilities are viewed as passive and helpless. Consistent with findings from HelpAge International study on disability cash transfers in the Dry Zone in 2017, cases of self-exclusion or unwillingness to be identified as a disabled person by people and their family members were also found in LIFT's disability project areas. The focus on disability awareness raising activities targeting families of people with disabilities and their communities is important.

LIFT's implementing partners identified the need for other forms of livelihood support beyond vocational training for people with disability and their families. Sole care givers, who are usually the parents and close family members, for the house-bound people with disabilities find it difficult to leave the house and work outside. Home-based income generating activities are the most suitable for them. Similarly, depending on the type of disability and barriers faced, skills training for people with disabilities also need to be adjusted according to people's abilities and needs. LIFT's partners are investigating other ways to provide livelihood support, such as through self-help groups for people with disabilities.

Graduate Institute of social work

In recent years, the Department of Social Welfare increased its key flagship programmes: maternal and child cash transfer (MCCT) and social pension. In 2019, MCCT had covered Chin, Rakhine, Kayah, Kayin and Naga Self-Administered Zone. In terms of social pensions, the age eligibility was lowered from 90 to 85 years and resulted in an increase in the number of people enrolled in the social pension programme. In order to deliver a comprehensive and sustainable social service delivery system, one of the key components is to ensure that the qualified social workers are in place across the country. In 2019, DSW approached LIFT for support for a Graduate Institute of Social Work (GISW). The GISW would aim to produce qualified social workers for delivering social services in Myanmar. The key aspects of the technical assistance that are under discussion focuses on the design and early implementation of key aspects of the GISW, including institutional development as well as curriculum and faculty development.

4.5 CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE⁸⁹

Economic growth is recognised as the dominant engine for poverty reduction and human development. There has been no poverty reduction at scale without strong economic growth. However, the sustainability of this model has been called into question as it is contingent on depletion and destruction of natural resources and services that lead to increased inequality.

As a consequence of unsustainable growth, the whole notion of inclusiveness⁹⁰ is threatened. Poorest communities are often reliant on environmental capital for their livelihoods and are hence disproportionately affected. They are more vulnerable to, and least able to cope with, droughts and floods that are exacerbated by environmental degradation including climate change. However, they also benefit when natural resources are available, well managed and used productively.

While Myanmar has achieved significant economic growth, the impacts of climate change will undermine development outcomes and will continue to do so into the future if these impacts are not managed or addressed.⁹¹ The observed and projected changes in climate include increases in temperature, variations in rainfall and an increased occurrence and severity of extreme weather events such as cyclones, floods, droughts, intense rainfall events and extreme high temperatures. Myanmar is already experiencing a decrease in the duration of the south-west monsoon season due to its late onset and early retreat.⁹²

Building resilience through agricultural diversification

LIFT through a range of interventions supports communities in their efforts to adapt to climate change and to build resilience. A common thread that is often observed through these interventions is that households, whether landed or landless, that do not diversify their income sources, are more vulnerable to shocks and stresses. Diversification to alternative livelihoods is a key strategy for enhancing adaptive capacities and building resilience into households across the country. For agricultural communities this diversification could include changes in crops and cropping systems, livestock production systems, aquaculture and intensification of homestead-based production systems (i.e. home gardens, small livestock production) that have food and nutritional security outcomes. Clear flexibility, nimbleness and a shift away from 'locked in' value chains, that are often

a consequence of 'specialisation', and infrastructure will provide the greatest resilience to future climates. Many of our modern food supply systems that provide our large urban populations are contingent on a 'just in time' model of delivery to supermarkets and a single logistical supply channel, both of which pose significant risk if supply chains are cut. Moving towards and promoting diverse and decentralised food supply chains will be critical in building resilience to future disruptive shocks. An example of such an approach is evident in the Uplands Food Security and Participation in Markets (UFS-PM) project implemented by Metta where a focus of the project has been on the establishment of six decentralised oil extraction and production facilities in Kachin and northern Shan supplying product to local markets.

Core to much of LIFT's programming that has occurred in the Delta and Dry Zone has been the promotion of good agricultural practices (GAP). This aligns and supports the Agricultural Development Strategy of the Myanmar's Government and provides an opportunity to embed adaptation, mitigation and resilience to future climates for smallholder farmers. Within the context of GAP a range of techniques have been promoted as a shift towards more conservative approaches. These include:

Improved fertiliser use: In the Delta, farmers have been encouraged to reduce the amount of urea used in rice-based cropping systems from four bags to two bags per acre, applied as split applications. Over the course of LIFT's Delta programme more than 77,000 farmers participated in GAP training. Based on conservative estimates that 10 per cent of these farmers adopted the recommended rate of two bags per acre from the traditional rate of four bags per acre, the total amount of urea saved over seven years of the Delta programme is 40,000 metric tons. This has clear carbon mitigation elements as well as cost savings for farmers. In 2019, the advantages of lower nitrogenous fertiliser inputs with the incorporation of split applications was a core demonstration focus of the International Fertilizer Development Centre's training programme in Kayah State where the average profitability for maize improved by 82 per cent from 2018 to 2019, largely due to improved nutrient management. Several IPs promoted the production of biochar from rice husks as a way of improving the fertility of their soils. This has resulted in innovations in the production of biochar at the household level.

⁸⁹ Resilience in the LIFT context is defined as the increased capacity of individuals, households and communities to cope with, and recover from, shocks and stresses arising from climate change, and/or macro and micro socio-economic pressures

⁹⁰ Inclusiveness is interpreted in this context as poverty reduction and social inclusion

⁹¹ Myanmar Climate Change Strategy 2018 – 2030 [MCCS] 2019. Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MONREC). <http://unhabitat.org.mm/publications/myanmar-climate-change-strategy-2018-2030/>

⁹² Myanmar National Adaptation Programme of Action 2012 <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/napa/mmr01.pdf>

Improved seed: Much of the effort of LIFT's agricultural interventions has been around improved access to quality seed and associated yield advantages. Within the Delta 2 and 3 programmes the production of quality rice seed contributed to increased yields of between 10 - 15 baskets per acre. Assuming that over the course of the programme approximately 113,271 baskets of quality seed was produced by IPs and assuming the aforementioned yield advantage of 15 baskets per acre, the increased yield in grain and straw are approximately 25,000 and 70,000 metric tons of biogenic carbon. The growing of improved pulses has also had positive impacts on biological nitrogen thereby reducing dependency on inorganic nitrogenous fertilisers.

Resilience studies published in 2019

In 2019, a synthesis report⁹³ from the findings of a series of three in-depth outcome studies commissioned by LIFT was published. These studies addressed the Evaluation and Learning Question: *"To what extent has LIFT contributed to strengthening the resilience of poor people in Myanmar and helped them to hang in, step up and step out?"*

The studies draw primarily on LIFTs quantitative panel survey data from two rounds of Household Surveys conducted in 2015 and 2017, qualitative data collected through narrative interviews in 2016 and 2018, and a review of secondary data and project documents.

The resilience synthesis paper provides a synopsis of the impact of LIFT's efforts to meet its overall objectives and provides recommendations for the implementation of programmes moving forward. Key findings and recommendations follow.

Shocks and stresses are common occurrences among households in LIFT's implementation areas with more than 50 per cent of households reporting exposure to some form of shock or stress with one-third reporting that these shocks affected them 'severely' or 'somewhat severely'. At the household level, 'severe injury, illness or death of a household member' was the most frequently reported shock (17 per cent), followed by natural disasters (13 per cent). At the village level, the most frequently reported shocks were crop failure, market price crashes for crops and price-spikes for food items. Villages in the Dry Zone were predisposed to widespread crop failure (19 per cent of villages) and market price crashes (25 per cent of villages), followed by villages in the Uplands. Market price spikes for essential food items were reported in 11 per cent, 9 per cent and 8 per cent of villages in the Dry Zone, Delta and Uplands respectively. Flooding and drought affected a smaller proportion of villages but were most prevalent in

the Dry Zone. Exposure to shocks and stresses were found to have a significant negative effect on the vulnerability status of households and the nutritional status of children under five years of age. Households affected by shocks and stresses between 2015 and 2017 were more likely to be affected by wasting, and more likely to become vulnerable than households that did not experience shocks and stresses.

The coping strategies of households in response to shocks and stresses are diverse and include borrowing money, seeking alternative income streams, and depleting assets. Some variation in practices, depending on the nature of the shock or stress faced, were found. Qualitative data provided important insights into the dynamics of coping. The first is the existence of a negative spiral into worsening poverty, triggered by exposure to a shock or stress and compounded by a series of unsuccessful coping practices. Asset depletion appears to be a key indicator of this cycle. The second is the dual nature of borrowing, which can either enable households to cope with the shocks and stresses or push them into a cycle of debt, depending on the circumstances. However, the expanded availability of cheaper credit appears to have made borrowing a more positive proposition than it was in the past. The third is the role of wider systems and structural factors, ranging from gender relations and norms to market dynamics (e.g. food price spikes and price crashes for crops), the quality and accessibility of public services such as infrastructure or health services, and the decline of traditional social institutions and their function in providing social safety nets.

The LIFT Household Survey indicated that 66 per cent of households received some form of development assistance from NGOs, government or the private sector. Forty-nine per cent reported access to financial inclusion, 24 per cent received some form of agricultural support (including crop, livestock and aquaculture), 22 per cent received WASH support; only 6 per cent received support for off-farm income generation activities. The majority of households received at least two types of support, though different interventions were found to target different wealth groups. Female-headed households and the poorest households were still the least likely to receive support, despite progress toward greater inclusion.

LIFTs contribution to resilience largely supported improved outcomes with respect to income and assets. This appeared to be greatest amongst households affected by shocks and stresses. From 2015 to 2017, 25 per cent of households stepped out of poverty⁹⁴, while 14 per cent fell into it, corresponding to a net reduction in the poverty

⁹³ Ling A. and Travis, C. 2019. Strengthening Resilience in Rural Myanmar 2014 – 2018: A Synthesis Paper.

ALINE Impact Limited for LIFT.

⁹⁴ Based on the locally defined poverty line

rate of 11 per cent. Almost all of this reduction was among households receiving LIFT support, who saw a 14 per cent reduction in the poverty rate compared to no reduction in poverty among households that did not receive support. While there was an overall increase in reported outcomes across all surveyed households, the increase was greatest amongst households that received LIFT support, i.e. incomes increased by 29 per cent for households that received support compared to 19 per cent for households not receiving support. Households receiving more interventions — and particularly those that received financial inclusion support in combination with other forms of support — were more likely to experience an increase.

LIFT's support significantly reduced the negative impact on incomes from exposure to shocks and stresses. However, the effect on mitigating shocks and stresses on nutrition outcomes could not be assessed. This assumed to be due to the complex interplay of factors shaping nutritional outcomes as well as limitations in the survey design. Overall, the nutrition study found an improvement in months of adequate household food provisioning, although seasonal food shortages remain. There were modest improvements in wasting but a worsening situation with respect to stunting, which may in part be driven by the addition of households in the 2017 survey from Chin State, which has some of the worst nutritional outcomes in the country. Further, underweight rates for women (using mid upper arm circumference measurements) were found to have improved slightly, though they remain high. The results for women's minimum dietary diversity indicate modest improvements but a challenge with 89 per cent of women still not achieving adequate nutrition. In terms of LIFT support, nutrition and WASH interventions appear to be lessening trends of nutritional deterioration in some areas.

The impact of LIFT support on vulnerability was most pronounced among those affected by shocks and stresses. Overall, the proportion of households classified as vulnerable reduced from 24.5 per cent in 2015 to 22.4 per cent in 2017. However, when exposed to any LIFT intervention, the proportion of households exposed to shocks and stresses classified as vulnerable reduced from 26 per cent to 23 per cent. Even larger reductions in vulnerability were seen when households received WASH assistance (from 30 per cent to 18 per cent), followed by financial inclusion (from 28 per cent to 22 per cent). The results for other forms of support did not show statistically significant effects. Contrasting this, households exposed to shocks and stresses that received no assistance saw increases in vulnerability from 29 per cent to 36 per cent.

Key recommendations that emerged from the synthesis of the three papers included:

Households receiving LIFT support were more likely to emerge from poverty and more likely to experience income increases, than those that did not receive support. Despite these gains, however, a large section of people fell below the poverty line between 2015 and 2017 and saw their incomes decrease. While LIFT support mitigated such negative outcomes, the findings point to the non-linearity of development processes.

- » Shocks and stresses affect 50 per cent of households in total, and one-third of households severely or somewhat severely. Communities and households affected by shocks and stresses are more likely to experience worsening nutritional outcomes, increases in poverty and vulnerability, and reduced incomes.
- » While LIFT support tended to benefit better-off households, some modest progress was made toward reaching vulnerable groups. However, the most vulnerable groups — including female-headed households and households with people with disabilities — continued to be under-served and were also the least likely to reap the benefits of development assistance.
- » Having access to multiple interventions - and particularly a combination of financial inclusion and other types of support - appears to have increased the likelihood of households emerging from poverty and coping better with shocks and stresses.
- » Households benefiting from LIFT support were more likely to fare better - in terms of changes to their income and vulnerability - when faced with shocks and stresses than those who do not receive any support. Further, the more support a household received, the more likely they were to be able to cope successfully. However, it should be noted that wealthier households were both more likely to receive support and to cope better with shocks and stresses.
- » Some households were found to be at risk of entering a spiral of increasing vulnerability and hardship as a result of exposure to shocks and stresses. These were likely to be the most vulnerable households — either female-headed households or those with disabilities.

Public and community-based infrastructure and services have an important role to play that can shape outcomes as they expand the range of better coping strategies that households can take recourse to when exposed to shocks and stresses.

The Nutrition and Resilience in Myanmar: Improving the Nutritional Status of Women and Children in LIFT-Supported Villages 2014-2018 (Nutrition Part 2) study presents an in-depth analysis of LIFT 2015 and 2017 Nutrition Survey data through a nutrition-resilience lens.

It provides an overview of LIFT's nutrition-related programmes; and measures nutrition-related changes at the village level, the household level, and individual level, including stunting and wasting rates of children and underweight measurements and dietary diversity of mothers. The report explores the drivers of child stunting and wasting and women's nutrition, as well as the effects of shocks and stresses on nutrition outcomes.

Some of the findings from this study that pertain to LIFT interventions areas include:

- » Shocks affect wasting and to a lesser extent stunting. Wasting rates (severe and moderate) are higher in villages that have experienced storms or cyclones, and the wasting rates increase as the exposure and severity of the shock increases.
- » Coping strategies varied according to the shock experienced. Evidence supports the absorptive and adaptive capacities among the LIFT communities. For example, when exposed to drought households sell livestock, and valued assets, spend their savings, take loans, and seek help from family and friends. When coping with flooding, similar coping strategies are used. Other strategies included migration, following an emergency plan or raising an alarm to evacuate to safer ground in case of cyclone, storms or flooding.

LIFT's implementing partners report improvements in their target groups' capacity to cope with shocks and stresses. Some of the linkages demonstrated by the projects are based on action at the individual level (e.g. managing seasonal changes in farming), at the household level (e.g. using techniques for home gardening that are climate-resilient), at the community level (e.g. Community Led Total Sanitation certification process to achieve 100 per cent coverage of zero open defecation) and at the regional level (training to township and regional administration to develop social protection plans).

The poor nutritional situation among women and children is demonstrative of the insufficient resilience capacity at all levels. Investing in joint nutrition resilience programmes and adaptive monitoring systems are crucial steps to promoting absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities among vulnerable populations in Myanmar.

The resilience studies published in 2019 can be found here <https://www.lift-fund.org/strengthening-resilience-lift-supported-villages-2014-2018a-synthesis-paper>



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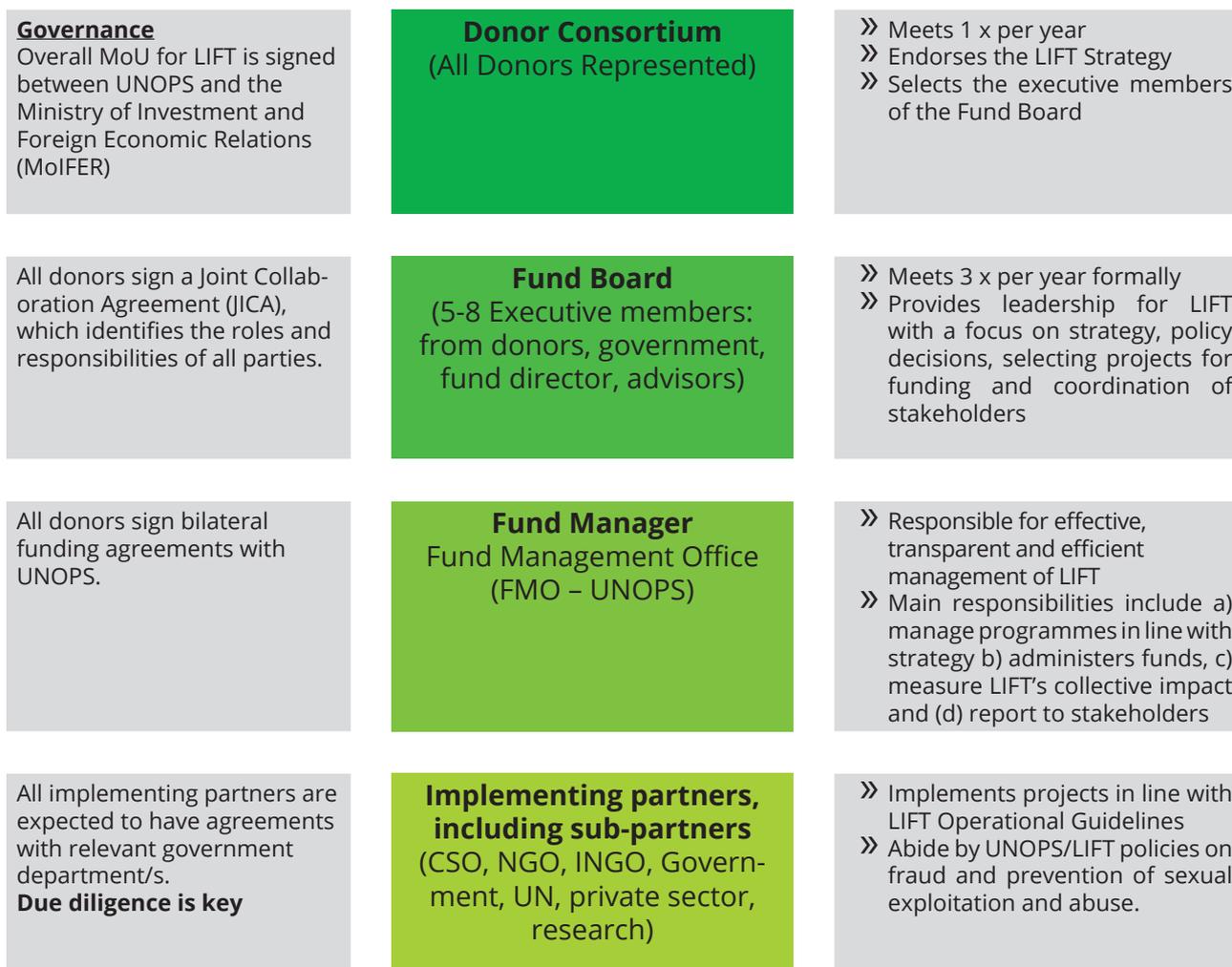
FUND MANAGEMENT

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FUND MANAGEMENT

5.1 LIFT GOVERNANCE

The below diagram depicts LIFT's governance relationships for 2019-2023.



LIFT's main governance document is the Joint Collaboration Agreement (JCA) which is a legally non-binding document that all LIFT's donors sign. Each donor has a negotiated bilateral funding agreement with UNOPS. The JCA contains three annexes relating to the terms of reference for the Donor Consortium, Fund Board and the Fund Manager (referred to as the FMO).

Donor Consortium

The LIFT Donor Consortium met on 19 September 2019 to review LIFT's progress and finalise amendments for the governance framework for 2019-2023. The findings from the governance review of LIFT were also presented and actions agreed.

Fund Board

The Fund Board held three formal meetings in 2019, with a further four ad-hoc meetings held for decisions. In the formal meetings the Fund Board reviews and decides on a full suite of standard items. The ad-hoc meetings are arranged for decisions as required.

There was a change in governance arrangements in September 2019, with Switzerland assuming the chair of the Fund Board and UK assuming the chair of the Donor Consortium.

Fund Board donors represented in the Fund Board for 2019 continued to be the United Kingdom, European Union, Australia, Switzerland, the United States and Canada. The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MOALI) was represented through two representatives (Department of Planning and the Minister's Office). During the year, the Fund Board agreed to invite the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MSWRR) to join the Fund Board; this was concluded and in 2020 the Ministry joined with the representation of the Director General and Director from the Department of Social Welfare (DSW).

Fund Management Office

The Fund Management Office (FMO) transitioned to the 2019-2023 strategy during 2019, including agreeing some team and staff changes, to be fully operationalised during 2020.

Engagement with Government of Myanmar

LIFT's Fund Management Office (FMO) and the Fund Board maintain good relations across a number of ministries at Union, State and Regional levels. Through its implementing partners, LIFT additionally connects with government at all levels. The presence of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI) on the Fund Board, since 2016, ensures an understanding of government perspectives and alignment as needed.

Engagement with actors in conflict-affected areas of Myanmar

As LIFT transitioned to the 2019-2023 strategy with its emphasis on conflict-affected areas and vulnerable groups, the Fund Board required an associated increase in understanding and relationships in conflict-affected areas, including with civil society organisations, service providers and ethnic armed organisations. To this end, in 2019, LIFT revised its conflict strategy and conflict sensitivity principles, both made publicly available. LIFT also agreed to establish a critical-friends group, to review and advise on LIFT's strategic direction and programme priorities.

Engagement with Sector Coordination Groups

Within the Agriculture and Rural Development Sector Coordination Group (ARD-SCG), LIFT's role in 2019 was to work closely with the secretariat at MoALI's Department of Planning and support the co-facilitators USAID and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The policy team supports that function, the engagement provides useful insights relevant to LIFT, helps to draw links across partners and programmes and contributes to good working relations. LIFT also engages in other sector and sub-sector groups, in particular for social protection and nutrition.

LIFT strategy

The LIFT strategy for 2019-2023 was developed during 2018 and approved in early 2019, as was the new logical framework with revised indicators. The Donor Consortium endorsed the strategy and logframe at their 19 September 2019 meeting.

Governance review

In 2018, the LIFT Fund Board commissioned a governance review with the principle aim of determining if LIFT's governance structures were well equipped and suitable for their designated roles. The report from Sinzar Consulting made a number of recommendations which were reviewed by the LIFT Fund Board, a number accepted and action plans put in place.

Funding to Government

LIFT's funding to the Department of Social Welfare in the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MSWRR) continued during 2019 for the maternal and child cash transfer (MCCT) programme in Chin State. The last payment from LIFT for the cash transfers was made in August, with the successful and celebrated transition to government budget for the monthly cash transfers to every woman in Chin who is pregnant or with a child under the age of two. LIFT's support for operational costs and technical assistance, particularly with regards to monitoring and evaluation, continues into 2020. The relevant technical teams at LIFT continue to benefit from coordination meetings, monitoring visits, knowledge sharing sessions to ensure continuous improvements in project controls and learning.

During 2019, LIFT's support to DSW and the MCCT programme expanded to Kayah and Kayin States and this is detailed in the Nutrition Chapter of this report.

Collaboration with Access to Health fund

In 2019, LIFT continued to strengthen collaboration with the Access to Health Fund. Nutrition continues to be the main area of collaboration, with the funds sharing a technical adviser to develop new strategies and programmes in nutrition. Through this adviser and other programme experts, LIFT and Access to Health provided strategic support to the National Nutrition Centre (NNC) throughout 2019.

LIFT and Access to Health also co-funded and both benefited from conflict sensitivity technical assistance from RAFT, Myanmar, provided to the implementing partners and the Fund Management Offices.

Efficiencies through Programme Management Office

In 2019, UNOPS Myanmar managed three large multi-donor Funds (Joint Peace Fund, Access to Health, and LIFT) in addition to being the Principal Recipient for the Global Fund, and managing the UN Trade Cluster Fund for SECO. Following through on an agreement to streamline the previous individualised programme support units for each of the funds, a Programme Management Office (PMO) was established in 2018. At a minimum, this shared structure provides the four main functions in programme support (grant management, administration and operations, budgeting and reporting, and oversight/audit), in addition to coordinating other non-subject matter tasks in programme management such as risk management, due diligence, performance

management, and inter-fund collaboration. In 2019, this structure allowed for LIFT and the other funds to benefit from learning and adapting to best practices, from harmonisation and standardisation of templates and processes, while maintaining the flexibility and adaptability to the Fund Board and donors. Amongst other initiatives, the PMO coordinated mapping of partners against the Fact-Finding mission report, rolled out its own comprehensive due diligence assessment for downstream partners, organised multiple workshops for partners at the operational and strategic levels, updated LIFT's fraud and safeguards framework, facilitated a project on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse capacity building for IPs, and provided overall capacity building to partners. LIFT's best practices and examples were also shared widely across UNOPS offices and were replicated in selected offices such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, in PMO's capacity as Asia Centre for Fund Management.

Table 5.1: Fund Management Office performance indicators

| Indicator | LIFT target 2019 | Achieved 2019 | per cent |
|--|-------------------|---------------|----------|
| % of clear Fund Board (FB) recommendations implemented by Fund Manager (FM) within given deadlines | 100% | 93% | 93% |
| % and number of audit areas (both FM and IPs) rated 'high priority' by the auditors | 0 for all parties | 14* | |

Note: * There were 14 high priority audit observation for the IPs (out of 258 observations in total). The FMO had no observation. The audit of 2019 expenditure will take place in 2020.

5.2 ALLOCATION OF LIFT FUNDS

LIFT uses certain indicators to track the degree to which funds are allocated in line with Fund Board policies and are accounted for in a transparent manner. The Fund Management Office (FMO) continues to have robust financial and management controls in place and continues to implement them consistently. The annual audit for the LIFT FMO for FY2018 was carried out in May 2019. LIFT received an overall satisfactory rating from the auditors, as well as satisfactory ratings on the various functional areas that were in the scope of the audit, such as finance, procurement and supply chain, human resources, project management and general administration. Unlike prior years, there were no audit observations for the FMO this year.

In terms of audits of implementing partners, it was a busy year with a total of 87 projects being audited, the highest number of projects since the start of LIFT. There were 71 audits in 2018. There was a slight increase in observations of 'high priority', from eight in the previous year, to 14 high priority observations for FY2018.

In terms of grants management, 2019 was a record year for LIFT. In 2019, LIFT managed 100 grants, of which 34 ended over the course of 2019, including four that ended in December. At the end of December 2019, LIFT had 66 ongoing projects, as the FMO continues to manage the closure process for grants that ended over the course of the year. LIFT worked with 65 partners in 2019, and the proportional distribution of partners remains similar to prior years with a slight increase in partners from the private sector (see figure 5.1)

Figure 5.1 Proportion of implementing partners by type in 2019

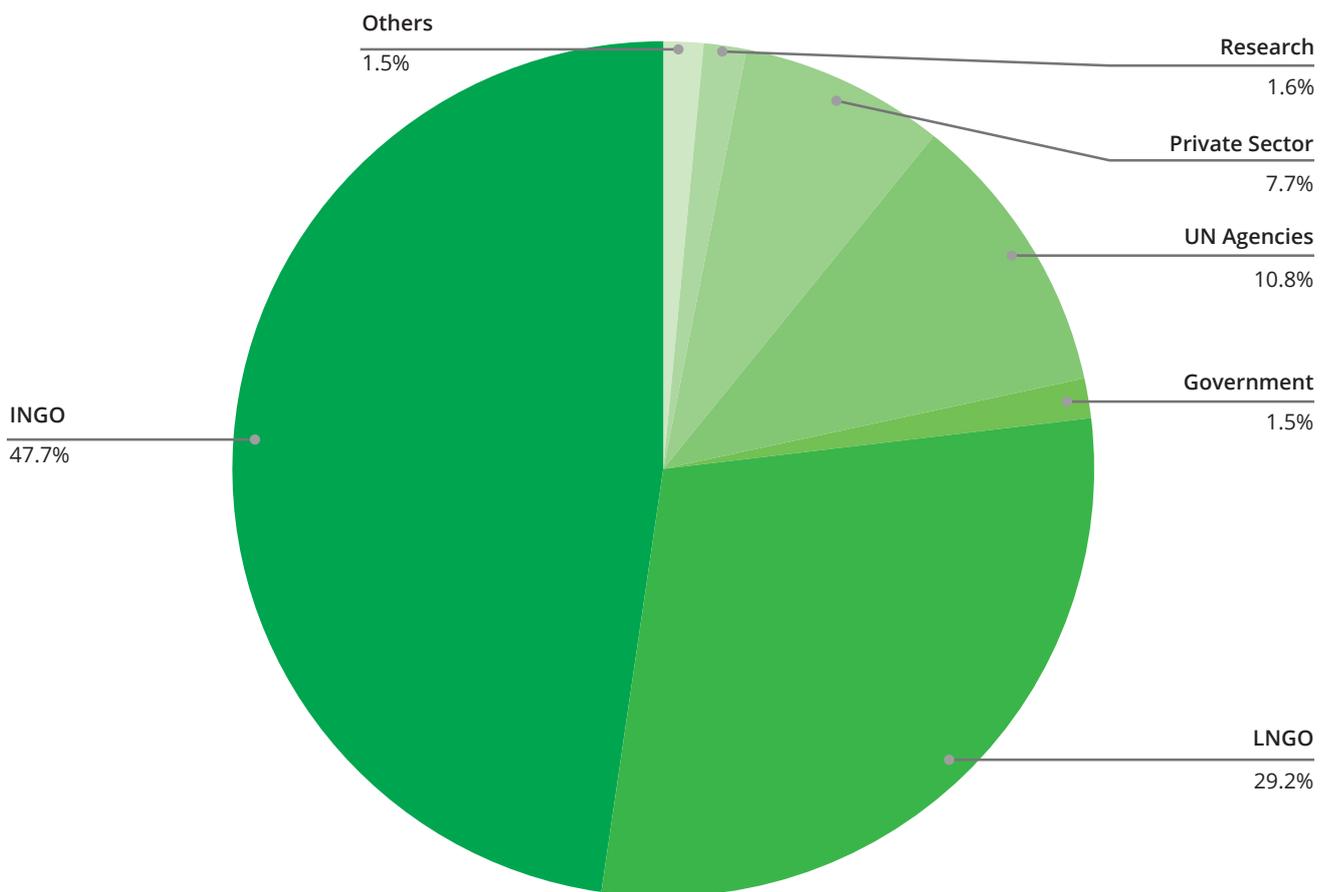


Table 5.2 Project status by funding window as of end December 2019

| Old Funding Windows/New Theme | Contracts signed | | Projects finished (end of Dec 2019) | Ongoing projects | Contract amendments | |
|--|------------------|------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------|
| | 2018 | 2019 | | | 2018 | 2019 |
| | A | B | | | C | D=B-C |
| Old LIFT | 180 | 103 | 103 | 0 | 336 | 190 |
| Agriculture, markets and food systems (AG) | | 25 | 14 | 11 | | 71 |
| Decent Work and Labour Mobility (DW) | | 25 | 4 | 21 | | 50 |
| Financial Inclusion and Private Sector (FI & PS) | | 20 | 7 | 13 | | 49 |
| Nutrition (NU) | | 28 | 8 | 20 | | 51 |
| Others (World Bank/Decent Work) | | 2 | 1 | 1 | | 1 |
| Grand Total | 180 | 203 | 137 | 66 | 336 | 412 |

5.3 FUND FLOW AND PARTNER PERFORMANCE

LIFT uses two indicators to track fund flow performance. As seen from the table 5.3, LIFT's implementing partners follow the LIFT operational guidelines closely and have good financial controls in place. A total of USD 692,054 was identified as ineligible expenditures, which represents 1.2 per cent of total expenditure incurred by the IPs (1.5 per cent in the previous year).

Additionally, LIFT started using a tailored 'traffic light' tool in 2012 to monitor the project management performance of all implementing partners. The results for the projects active in 2019 are summarised in Table 5.4. In total, 72 projects have been assessed with this tool, the highest number since the inception of LIFT. This is also reflected in the delivery of projects in 2019, and indicates that the programmes are in full implementation. The results of the traffic lights this

year are similar to 2018. Performance of partners is comparable to previous years, with a slight increase in implementation, and reduction of figures in the 'medium risk' column. Efforts to work more closely with implementing partners to prepare more realistic budgets and follow up on delays in implementation is reflected by only 23 per cent of the projects having less than a 70 per cent expenditure rate. Reasons for low expenditures are varied, however, they relate often to implementing partners being too ambitious in their first year of implementation, facing delays in their setting up of the projects. Additionally, working more in conflict-affected areas in 2019, while aligning with the new thematic areas posed additional delivery challenges. Timely submission of the 2019 reports was affected due to the 2020 COVID-19 crisis and related restrictions. The implementing partners will be informed about their individual traffic lights, while the overall results are used by the FMO to analyse the functioning of the established systems and mechanisms.

Table 5.3 Results for fund flow and implementing partner performance, 2019

| Indicator | LIFT target 2019 | Achieved 2019 | per cent |
|--|------------------|---------------|----------|
| Percentage of funds released by FMO that are in line with IP contracts | 87% | *98.8% | 114% |
| Percentage of IPs for whom the FMO completes a financial system review | 100% | 99% | 99% |

Note: * This is based on the amount of IP expenditure deemed ineligible as a proportion of total IP expenditure, based on the audit of 2017 expenditure (1.5% of total expenditure incurred by the IPs).

Table 5.4 Summary of project management indicators by 'traffic light' category for 2019

| | Indicator | Low risk (Green) | | Medium risk (Yellow) | | High risk (Red) | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| | | Threshold | per cent of grants | Threshold | per cent grants | Threshold | per cent of grants |
| 1 | Implementation rate | >90% on track | 54% | 71% - 90% on track | 19% | <=70% on track | 27% |
| 2 | Annual expenditure | >90% spent | 40% | 71% - 90% spent | 37% | <=70% spent | 23% |
| 3 | Reporting timeliness | 0 days late | 75% | 1-7 days late | 19% | >8 days late | 6% |
| 4 | Report completeness | 100% complete | 96% | 71 - 99% complete | 0% | <=70% complete | 4% |
| 5 | Management controls** | 0 open observations | 43% | 1-3 open observations | 38% | >3 open observations | 19% |
| Overall rating *** | | | | | | | |
| | 2019 | 51% | | 41% | | 8% | |
| | 2018 | 45% | | 44% | | 11% | |
| | 2017 | 45% | | 45% | | 11% | |
| | 2016 | 49% | | 45% | | 6% | |
| | 2015 | 41% | | 45% | | 14% | |
| | 2014 | 51% | | 37% | | 12% | |
| | 2013 | 48% | | 41% | | 11% | |
| | 2012 | 32% | | 41% | | 32% | |

* Based on available data as of April 2020; grants to UN are not audited and therefore are not considered for certain indicators. The overall rating is assigned through the weighting of the risk assessment of each of the five indicators.

**Based on available data as of April 2020 as audits for the fiscal year take place in Q2 of the following year.

*** The overall rating is assigned through the weighting of the risk assessment of each of the five indicators.

5.4 FINANCE

During 2019, LIFT increased from USD 509 million at the end of 2018 to USD 539 million.

LIFT had budgeted for a delivery of USD 74.4 million during 2019 and spent lower, USD 64.5 million. While most of the existing grantees performed well, the lower delivery was due to a number of reasons but in the main due to delayed call for proposals from 2019 to 2020, several costed and non-costed extensions leading to moving of final payments to later years, and delayed grants implementation (digital finance, capital expansion, Awba). The underspend in the human resources budget was caused by several late onboarding, personnel changes and efficiencies.

Table 5.5: Cumulative donor contributions up to 31 December 2019 (USD)

| Donor | Signed Commitments* | Percentage of Total |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| | USD | |
| Australia | 26,170,439 | 4.9% |
| Canada | 11,475,850 | 2.1% |
| Denmark | 9,991,566 | 1.9% |
| European Union | 143,769,882 | 26.9% |
| France | 1,319,800 | 0.2% |
| Ireland | 2,075,382 | 0.4% |
| Italy | 852,040 | 0.2% |
| luxembourg | 1,129,328 | 0.2% |
| Mitsubishi | 200,000 | 0.0% |
| Netherlands | 2,950,000 | 0.6% |
| New Zealand | 809,650 | 0.2% |
| Sweden | 2,725,776 | 0.5% |
| Switzerland | 40,249,318 | 7.5% |
| United Kingdom | 265,810,305 | 49.8% |
| United States | 20,000,000 | 3.7% |
| UNDP/PGMF | 4,694,399 | 0.9% |
| Total donors' contribution | 534,223,734 | 100% |
| Interest earned | 5,226,422 | |
| Total | 539,450,157 | |

* Commitments may vary slightly from 2018 figures due to changes in exchange rates.

Figure 5.2 Cumulative LIFT donors' contribution received in USD (millions) 2010-2019

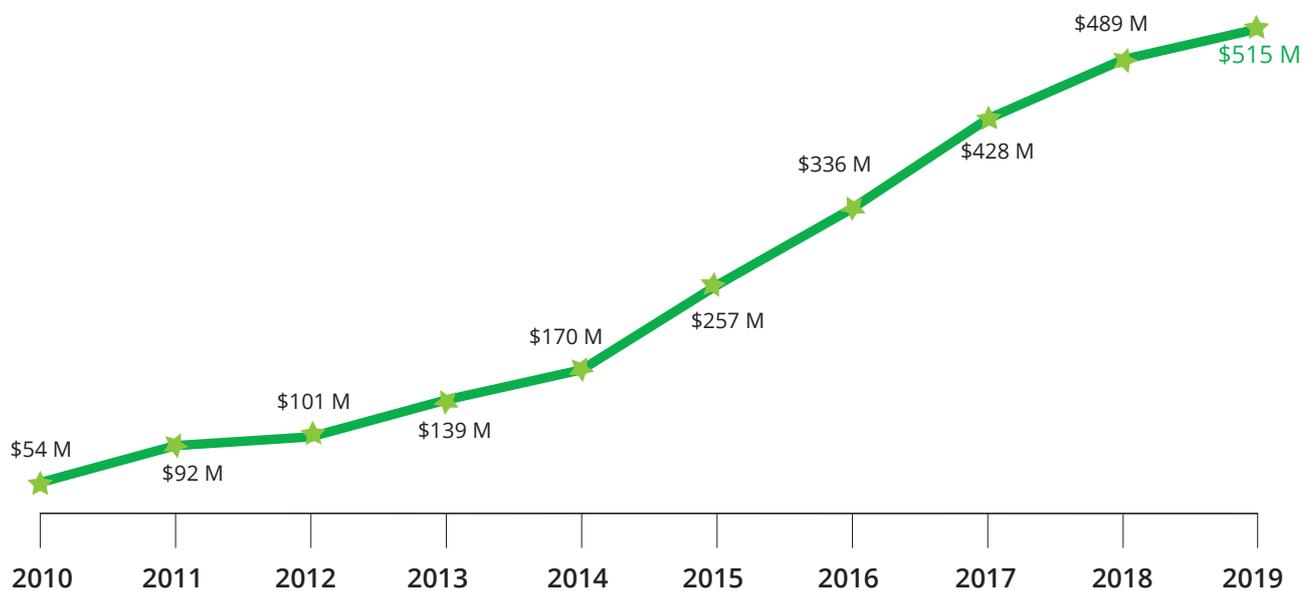
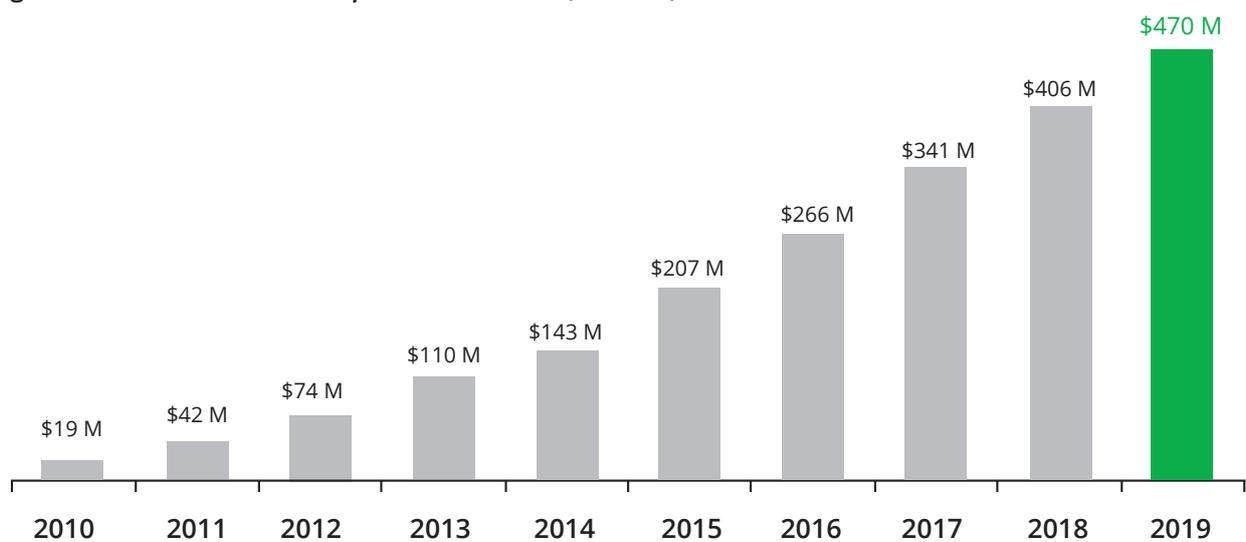


Table 5.6. LIFT expenditure for 2019

| Activity | Budget (USD) | Actual (USD) | Over/Under spent | % |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Grants and Supports | | | | |
| Grants to implementing partners | 57,029,831 | 46,834,676 | (10,195,155) | -18% |
| Non-grant supports | 7,335,689 | 8,098,491 | 762,802 | 10% |
| Research | 2,171,014 | 2,190,957 | 19,943 | 1% |
| Operation of the Fund Manager's office | 6,372,829 | 5,885,479 | (487,350) | -8% |
| Support to the Fund Board | 24,630 | 29,990 | 5,360 | 22% |
| Facilities and administration | 1,500,499 | 1,420,511 | (79,988) | -5% |
| Total | 74,434,492 | 64,460,104 | (9,974,388) | -13% |

Figure 5.3. Cumulative LIFT expenditure in USD (millions) 2010-2019



Monitoring and evaluation for accountability and learning (MEAL)

During 2019, LIFT accomplished a number of MEAL-related milestones under the old MEAL framework, which revolved around ongoing project evaluations, strengthening implementing partner M&E systems and evaluation and learning studies. In addition, LIFT embarked on a process of refreshing the MEAL framework and structure to align with LIFT Strategy 2019-2023.

MEAL systems development and alignment with LIFT Strategy 2019-2023

Through an elaborate process that entailed conducting feedback survey on the old MEAL strategy, internal consultative meetings with various stakeholders including the Fund Board, LIFT finalised the refreshed MEAL framework that was adopted in December 2019. The refreshed MEAL framework will be operational from 2020.

LIFT programmes and M&E team finalised the development of detailed indicator reference sheets (IRS) for the LIFT Strategy 2019-23 logframe. Further reviews will be undertaken in 2020 in light of the modifications that were adopted in the logframe indicators as well as feedback on indicator reporting.

FMO's M&E and Rakhine teams finalised a review of Canada's logframe indicators against the LIFT Strategy logframe. Further consultations were undertaken with the Canada team upon which consensus was reached on the key reporting milestones for 2020.

FMO team modified the reporting formats to align with the anticipated reporting requirements under the LIFT Strategy 2019-23 Logframe. The reporting format was piloted and IPs subsequently inducted on the format. However, it was evident that more time was required for IPs to fully transition and align their data collection tools to the requirements of the modified reporting format.

FMO engaged in an internal process of reorganising the LIFT MEAL tasks in accordance with the priorities of the new LIFT Strategy (2019-23). This process resulted into clearer delineation of MEAL tasks between LIFT-level and programme- and project-level tasks. It culminated with the expansion of LIFT M&E team by creating additional positions for M&E officers dedicated towards the programme and project level M&E tasks. Recruitment of the program M&E officers was concluded in December 2019 and the new staff will be on board from February 2020.

FMO M&E staff participated in a USAID MEAL working group meeting and discussed reporting data results, indicators and shared experiences and challenges related to Feed the Future Monitoring System (FTMS) reporting and third-party data collection.

FMO supported the Myanmar Monitoring and Evaluation Association (MMEA) during their capacity development workshop *Research Management Peer Review Monitoring Guidelines*. The new M&E Specialist commenced work in May 2019.

M&E related studies and project studies:

LIFT accomplished the following M&E studies and project evaluations

- » Finalised the 2018 household tracking survey that collected data from 1,520 households in 95 villages
- » FMO published the LIFT Household Survey 2017 report
- » FMO organised a LIFT resilience week in Yangon. Summary presentations were made on three studies conducted by LIFT: *Income and Assets study; Resilience and Vulnerability study and, Nutrition and Sustainability study*
- » FMO's nutrition team conducted an evidence-based review of the modalities and approaches necessary for maternal and cash transfers to create significant impact on nutrition. The review was intended to complement the learning paper on MCCT prepared by the learning and knowledge management team.

In addition to the above, FMO commissioned 28 project evaluations and one mid-term evaluation.

Mid-term Evaluations conducted from January to December 2019

| No | Implementing partners | Project title | Programme |
|----|-----------------------|--|-----------|
| 1 | ILO_Rakhine | The Skills Development project - Rakhine State | Rakhine |

End-of-Project Evaluation conducted from January to December 2019

| No. | Implementing partners | Project title | Programme |
|-----|-----------------------|--|---------------------|
| 1 | SC- Tat Lan Project | Tat Lan Sustainable Food Security And Livelihoods Programme Phase II | Rakhine Tat Lan II |
| 2 | SC-Delta project | Bright Sun: Building Resilience, Synergy | Delta III |
| 3 | CARE-Tat Lan project | Tat Lan Sustainable Food Security And Livelihoods Programme Phase II | Rakhine Tat Lan II |
| 4 | YOMA Bank | Agri-business Finance Programme | Financial Inclusion |
| 5 | LEAD | Supporting Landless Households Livelihoods And Food Security Through Alternative Income Generation Activities In Pyinsalu Sub-township | Delta III |
| 6 | World Vision | Growing Livelihood in Bogale | Delta III |
| 7 | Metta | Promotion of Farmer-Managed Schemes For Inclusive Growth And Sustainable Development | Delta III |
| 8 | MercyCorps | Linking Laputta To Markets (LLM): Increasing Incomes Through Agriculture, Skills & Employment | Delta III |
| 9 | WHH | Rice Seed Sector Development in Ayeyarwady Delta | Delta III |
| 10 | WHH/GRET | Delta Rural Intensification For Sustainable Economic Development- Delta Rise | Delta III |
| 11 | NAG | Improved Co-management of Ayeyarwady Wetland Resources | Delta III |
| 12 | Radanar Ayar | Integrated Agribusiness and Rural Development (IARD) Project | Delta III |
| 13 | IWMI/UNOPS | Pyawt Ywar Pump Irrigation Project Rehabilitation | PIP Dry zone |
| 14 | CRS | Productivity Agriculture Through Community Engagement [PACE] | Uplands |
| 15 | TBC | STAND UP: Sustainable Transformation of Agriculture, Nutrition and Development of Uplands | Uplands |
| 16 | TAG | Plan Bee: Introduction and Expansion of Modern Beekeeping And Honey Production in Southern Shan State | Uplands |

| End-of-Project Evaluation conducted from January to December 2019 | | | |
|---|---|--|------------------------------------|
| No. | Implementing partners | Project title | Programme |
| 17 | GEN | Deepening Commitment to Gender Equality in Myanmar | Civil Society |
| 18 | Food Security Working Group | Harnessing Resources and Partnerships to Achieve Food Security in Myanmar (Phase 2) | Agriculture, Market & Food Systems |
| 19 | GRET | 3 Small Grant Funds' final evaluation | Civil Society |
| 20 | Pact Institute, Inc. | 3 Small Grant Funds' final evaluation | Civil Society |
| 21 | SwissAid | 3 Small Grant Funds' final evaluation | Civil Society |
| 22 | PATH | Introduction of Fortified Rice in Myanmar" Project | Nutrition |
| 23 | World Fish | Promoting sustainable growth of aquaculture in Myanmar to improve food security and income for communities in the Ayeyarwady Delta and Central Dry Zone (MYFish-Culture- MYFC) | Nutrition |
| 24 | Action Aid | Social Economic Development Network for Regional Development | Decent Work |
| 25 | Save the Children | Technical Assistance to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement's Chin Maternal and Child Cash Transfer Programme (TEAM MCCT) | Nutrition |
| 26 | International Organization of Migration (IOM) | Capitalizing human mobility for poverty alleviation and inclusive development in Myanmar (CHIME) | Decent Work |
| 27 | International Organization of Migration (IOM) | Increasing Developmental Impact of Labour Migration through Strengthened Governance and Partnership (G&P) (implemented by a Consortium) Twe Let Project Phase I | Decent Work |
| 28 | GRET | Understanding rural land issues to engage comprehensive policy dialogue in Myanmar (LAND Project) | Policy |
| 29 | FAO | Improving Farmer Livelihoods in the Dry Zone through Improved Livestock Health, Productivity and Marketing" | Agriculture, Market & Food Systems |
| 30 | KMSS | strategic partnership for Civil Society Empowerment | Civil Society |
| 31 | NAG | strategic partnership for Civil Society Empowerment | Civil Society |
| 32 | Metta | strategic partnership for Civil Society Empowerment | Civil Society |

Strengthening implementing partner M&E systems

FMO continued to support partners implement their own M&E systems through a number of targeted trainings as well as M&E systems reviews.

M&E trainings

| Implementing partners | Project title | Programme | Topics |
|--------------------------------|--|-------------------|--|
| LEAD | Supporting Landless Households Livelihoods And Food Security Through Alternative Income Generation Activities In Pyinsalu Sub-township | Delta III | LIFT assisted into development of end line survey design including sampling methodology, questionnaires development, piloting and training to enumerators |
| Ko Ko Tech | Shwe Kayi Lan Bawga Maymay (Shwe May May), "Mommy who is on the golden journey" | Extra Nutrition | LIFT MEAL strategy and M&E data reporting in line with LIFT new strategy and IP's MEAL plan |
| NAG, WV, WHH-RSSD, IOM | NAG: Improved Co-Management of Ayeyarwaddy Wetland Resources WV: Growing Livelihood in Bogale Project WHH-RSSD: Support to Rice Seed Sector Development in the Ayeyarwady Delta, Myanmar IOM: Migration as a livelihood diversification strategy in the Delta (MILDAS) | Delta | M&E data reporting training with IPs M&E data reporting training with Rakhine IPs |
| SCI, IRC, ILO, RI, DRC | SCI: Tat Lan Plus IRC: Tat Lan Sustainable Food Security and Livelihoods Programme Phase II ILO: Skills for Improvement of Livelihoods, Economic Opportunities and Security (TVET) RI: Response Mechanism for Addressing Protracted Displacement in Rakhine State, Myebon and Mrauk U DRC: Vocational Training and Livelihood Opportunities for in Camp and out of Camp Youth in Rakhine State - Phase II | Rakhine | M&E data reporting training with Rakhine IPs |
| FAO | Improving Farmer Livelihoods in the Dry Zone through Improved Livestock Health, Productivity and Marketing" | Dry Zone | M&E data reporting training and plan for end-line survey |
| LEAD, ARROW CSO | Supporting landless households livelihoods and food security through alternative income generation activities in Pyinsalu Sub-Township | Delta | Financial Training LIFT provided basic principle of Bookkeeping and Account [voucher, ledger, cash boom, tri-balance, profit and loss, Balance Sheet preparation]. LIFT also provided key principle and practice about lesson learned and case study recording for project sustainability. |
| HPI, SPPRG, Golden Pearl, ECDC | HPI: Inclusive Social Protection and Livelihoods in Magway Region and Kayin State SPPRG: Inclusive Development by enabling Existing Actors (IDEA) Project Golden Pearl: Improving the Socio-economic situation of the Person with Disability ECDC: Nothing About Us Without All of Us : Promoting disability inclusive Chin Society for sustainable development. | Social Protection | Report on M&E reporting and MEAL Plan meeting |
| IOM, ILO, CARE, EDEN | IOM: Increasing Developmental Impact of Labour Migration through Strengthened Governance and Partnership (G&P) (implemented by a Consortium) ILO: Development of Internal and International Labour Migration Governance CARE: Aung Myin Hmu Project - Industry Solutions for Safe Employment EDEN: Eden Project to Rescue Migrant Women and Girls who have been Trafficked into Sexual Exploitation in Yangon | DWLM | M&E data reporting meeting with IPs |
| BBC MA | Kyat Chat: Making the Most of Migration and Money | DWLM | M&E data reporting meeting with IP |

M&E systems reviews

| Implementing Partner | Project title | Programme |
|----------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| DRC | Vocational Training and Livelihood Opportunities for in Camp and out of Camp Youth in Rakhine State | Rakhine |
| IOM_MWC | Increasing Developmental Impact of Labour Migration through Strengthened Governance and Partnership (G&P) (implemented by a Consortium) | Decent Work & Labour mobility |
| EDEN | Safe Migration and Empowerment for Migrant Women in Urban Areas | Decent Work & Labour mobility |
| IOM_PDN | Increasing the Developmental Impact of Labour Migration through Strengthened Governance and Partnership | Decent Work & Labour mobility |

Communications

The focus of 2019 for LIFT's Communications Unit was launching the refreshed strategy, organising the LIFT Forum 2019, and realigning communications with the 2019-2023 LIFT strategy. The communications team started regular communications workshops for implementing partners and donors, sharing best practices in order to learn from each other. These workshops were used as opportunities to hear feedback from these important stakeholders and gather input for the new LIFT communications strategy.

Increased visibility was the underlying focus of all of the communications team's activities in 2019.

Sharpening team roles: The communication team's skills strengths and gaps were identified and staffing and training plans were drafted. A welcome change for 2019 was the arrival of a UNOPS Myanmar graphic designer who supports LIFT 30 per cent of his time. The role of the international intern was redefined and changed from visual communication to a function with an editorial and proofreading focus. A national intern with an administrative and visual communication support role will join the team in 2020. The team's capacity will be further strengthened in 2020, especially to sharpen LIFT communication's national media relations focus.

Communications channels: Content creation output was boosted and a content calendar was created to strengthen planning. As a result, more, quality, regular communications content was published on the website and social media. Visual communication is a focus, and original content videos are created in-house when possible. LIFT's Twitter and YouTube channels were reinvigorated, and the LIFT newsletter was redesigned and relaunched as a bi-monthly communication product.

Stakeholders and relationships: Work processes with programme teams, IPs, donors, all FMO, the UNOPS Myanmar office and other UNOPS Myanmar funds were established. The first IP communications workshop was organised in October and the donor communications workshop was held in January 2020.

LIFT Forum

The forum was organised in June and it launched the refreshed LIFT strategy. The communications products prepared for the forum outlined LIFT's intent for 2019-2023. LIFT Forum 2019 set the scene also in terms of level of event and LIFT's visual identity.

2019-2023 Communications Strategy

The objectives of the strategy were defined in consultation with relevant FMO colleagues and stakeholders and the communications workshops were used as a forum for this. As part of this exercise, LIFT's tone of voice in external communication was revisited, and a need for a refreshed approach was identified. To address this, a set of new communications products was planned under the tagline 'LIFT Voices'. Plans and budget for a new LIFT website were finalised and the work has started in 2020.

Internal communications and LIFT's visual identity

The communications team focused also on internal communication in 2019, as "all communication starts from home", and no external communication campaign can succeed without internal support and buy-in. A new monthly staff town hall meeting upLIFT was launched, and LIFT's values were defined and communicated internally to form the basis of LIFT's external image, brand identity and visibility.

Refreshed brand: The arrival of a new graphic designer allowed for sharpening LIFT's visual image. Some brand elements were added and the LIFT colour scheme used in visuals and publications etc. was extended. New LIFT templates were designed in order to create a unified look to support the communications strategy.

The LIFT visibility guidelines were refreshed accordingly, and these were communicated to the IPs.

Social media statistics

Facebook is the most popular social media platform in Myanmar and has a key role in LIFT's social media strategy. Two social media campaigns focusing on the International Women's Day and 16 Days of Activism were published on the LIFT Facebook page. The content including the in-house produced videos created a lot of engagement, with audiences reaching over 70,000 users. A total of 221 posts highlighting the LIFT programmes, partners, events and success stories were published and the page had gained 33,000 followers by the end of the year.

LIFT in the media

LIFT gained media coverage in the traditional and digital media. State-run media such as MRTV, the Pyithu Hluttaw Channel and Facebook page, Farmer Channel, MIFER, MSWRR and MOALI's official Facebook page, The Mirror, Myanma Ahlin and Global New Light of Myanmar shared news about the LIFT Forum and official meetings that took place with the Government. Other publications such as Frontier, Democratic Voice of Burma, The Farmer Media, 7 Days, Myanmar Times, Mizzima, MRTV-4 and MNTIV shared more than 40 news articles about LIFT, donors and partners. The key events and topics highlighted were the LIFT Forum, LIFT-supported seed fair in Ayeyarwady, the launch of the LIFT and Myanmar Awba project, the 16 Days of Activism campaign and migration-related articles.

Sharing knowledge through LIFT publications

Publications prepared and printed for dissemination by the communications team in 2019 included: Farming System Analysis, Farming System in Myanmar, LIFT Annual Report 2018, LIFT Highlights, and LIFT Strategy 2019-2023. Almost 100 studies, research papers and knowledge management and learning publications were published on the LIFT website <https://www.lift-fund.org/publications>.

Knowledge management and learning

A strategy to maximise LIFT's ability to generate, analyse and make better use of available evidence on programme performance was developed as part of the new MEAL strategy. This provides a more strategic, planned and coherent approach across the programme. Learning and adaptive management is one of the three key functions of the MEAL framework through which LIFT seeks to generate, share and use evidence about what works and what does not to improve performance and make course-corrections. All the three levels of LIFT, namely: Strategy, Programme and Implementation partners, will now incorporate knowledge management and learning processes and products linked to their respective programme strategies and interventions.

LIFT has delineated two broad priorities linked to learning and knowledge management. The first seeks to develop more accessible products by ensuring that knowledge products are more accessible and tailored to needs; engaging with wider the wider team; providing clearer direction for consultants and more creative and varied use of digital media – 'LIFT Voices'. The second priority focuses on events. LIFT will be seeking to bring practitioners and decision-makers together to assess evidence; launch learning, stimulate debate; plan the future; and build on LIFT's convening role.

Some of the initiatives supported by Learning and Knowledge Management in 2019 included:

LIFT Forum: Ten years of LIFT, and looking ahead

This was the main event of the year, with over 170 participants attending the forum in Nay Pyi Taw. Significant work went into the design, and engaging speakers and session leads. The event was formally opened by the Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, and the Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, with opening remarks from ambassadors and senior donor officials.

An excellent and diverse range of speakers was present at the event, drawing on government, local civil society, partners, and international donors and experts. On the final day of the event, the Fund Director and Fund Board representatives presented the new LIFT strategy for 2019–2023, reflecting on the issues and challenges aired earlier in the day.

LIFT Evaluation and Learning Questions (ELQs)

The latest LIFT ELQs study series were published and presented to the FMO and the Fund Board. The studies were highlighted on LIFT's social media channels and published on the website.

LIFT strives to be a collective and influential voice for innovation and learning that can inform development policy and practice in Myanmar. When implementation of the 2014-2018 strategy began, LIFT developed a monitoring and evaluation for accountability and learning (MEAL) framework that included a set of high-level evaluation and learning questions that LIFT would address. These questions cover key aspects of LIFT's performance: relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, and women's empowerment. They are intended to assess LIFT's performance and serve as tools to synthesise LIFT's learning in relation to the key evaluation criteria.

The second evaluation and learning question on programme effectiveness is: To what extent has LIFT contributed to strengthening the resilience of poor people in Myanmar and helped them to hang in, step up or step out? LIFT commissioned a series of three in-depth outcome studies, focusing on LIFT's contribution to each of the first three purpose-level outcomes: income, vulnerability and nutrition.

These studies draw primarily on LIFT Household Survey data from 2015 and 2017, complemented with qualitative data gathered from individuals in target communities and from LIFT's implementing partners. The findings from these three studies were synthesised into a resilience study that drew together the main findings from the individual studies, with a particular emphasis on LIFT's contribution to building resilience in the face of household exposure to shocks and stresses.

The series includes a total of five studies.

MCCT learning paper

LIFT developed a learning paper focused on assessing the progress of the maternal and child cash transfer (MCCT) programme. Focusing on the MCCT was an obvious priority, given the ambitious goals of the programme, and the encouraging progress that has been achieved through the collaboration of multiple actors in the past five years. The learning paper was produced for the LIFT Forum in English and Myanmar languages.

Learning from the Village Development Planning (VDP) process

LIFT's support to VDP phased out in 2018 and it was important to reflect on the learning from this initiative so that progress could be assessed and directions for future initiatives established. An illustrated brochure and specific, targeted policy briefs were developed and presented to parliamentary groups in March.

Systems development

Across its offices around the world, UNOPS adopted Google-based systems for email and document drives in 2019 in order to support more efficient and shared online working environments. This led to a complete reconstruction of the LIFT document drive, a process which the LKM Specialist managed and led for the LIFT FMO. The process helped to address the decreasing functionality and working practices that had been allowed to develop with the main data storage drive over several years. The transformation has improved document storage, remote access, collaborative working, reduction of duplication, and sharing in the new system. Achieving effective ways of working with the changes among staff are equally essential and were prioritised in the second half of 2019, after the official roll-out.

5.5 LIFT'S COVID-19 RESPONSES

In March 2020, COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic. LIFT took a two-track approach.

First, LIFT wrote to all implementing partners (IPs) to share the approach of UNOPS and LIFT to sustain operations and programmes to the extent possible, constantly assessing risk and programme criticality, and to be as flexible as possible in oversight of grants and programmes. LIFT assured IPs that communication lines were open and that LIFT was ready to support continued project activities and adaptations necessary to ensure continuity and/or respond to the crisis as it affected vulnerable groups across the country. Many partners proposed adaptations in response to COVID-19 and LIFT approved adjustments with more than 30 partners for preparedness work with vulnerable groups to the value of around USD 1 million. At this time, LIFT's Fund Management Office also developed programme briefs for the focus areas of a larger programme response for migrants, social protection, civil society, Rakhine and financial inclusion.

Next, came an allocation for additional funding for a scaled-up response to the crisis in Myanmar. On 31 March, in a teleconference meeting, LIFT's Fund Board approved an additional funding package of USD 15.8 million for LIFT's immediate COVID-19 response to be delivered through LIFT's programmes

and units relating to migrants, social protection, civil society, Rakhine and communications.

The additional funding was estimated to benefit 5.9 million people in Myanmar at a time when the country was making urgent preparations to respond to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. LIFT's assistance will be delivered through a front-line response by its implementing partners and it focuses on supporting the most vulnerable: migrants, the elderly, internally displaced people, pregnant women and those with children under the age of two.

By 10 April, the following actions had occurred in LIFT's programmes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic:

Migration: Partners of the peri-urban programme were working on the frontlines of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic since it began in Myanmar, providing crucial humanitarian assistance, information, hygiene products, legal aid and livelihood support to internal and international migrants. The Decent Work team worked quickly with these partners to restructure their programmes in response to this emerging threat. USD 447,000 of existing budgets were reallocated to provide an immediate response to the crisis, including interventions in Yangon, Kayin, Mon, Shan, Thanintaryi, Bago, Chin, Mandalay, Magway and Ayeyarwaddy. This critical support had already reached 84,417 direct beneficiaries.



LIFT Fund Director Katy Webley said:

"The COVID-19 pandemic is a challenge to Myanmar and its people, today and for the foreseeable future. In preparedness and response, we must seek to support the most vulnerable members of society and do so in a way that lifts the nation. With the funding from our donors, LIFT is proud to be able to offer assistance, working with civil society, government, ethnic service providers and all our implementing partners, to support preparedness, response and resilience at this crucial time in Myanmar."

Social protection: LIFT and the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) prepared to provide a one-time cash payment to 440,000 beneficiaries. Funds were deposited in a Disaster Management Fund held by the Ministry of Social Welfare and Resettlement (MoSWRR), to be disbursed to states and regions for distribution through channels already in place. Non-government controlled areas in Kayin and Kayah States where ethnic health organisations assist with maternal and child cash transfers were included as were the Camp Management Committees in Rakhine. Also, in support of DSW, HelpAge International (HAI) proposed a Shock Response Capacity Strengthening project with DSW. LIFT approved a reallocation of budget with HAI's social protection policy project based in Nay Pyi Taw to enable the publication of COVID-19 information materials focusing on prevention and mitigation measures concerning elderly populations.

Civil society: USD1.5 million was allocated to supporting CSO's response to the pandemic, estimated to benefit more than 1.5 million people. LIFT's strategic partners implementing the response were Karuna Mission Social Solidarity (KMSS), Metta, Land Core Group (LCG), Network Activities Group (NAG), and Gender Equality Network (GEN). These civil society organisations have extensive geographic coverage and close contact with large numbers of the population. The organisations were already supporting communities within their existing projects, individually and collectively and, with the additional LIFT funding they scaled-up their response to support preparedness for, and management of, recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Activities included support for migrant returnees, the general public and specific marginalised groups, internally displaced people and their host communities to fight the pandemic. The Gender Equality Network had already partnered with Mizzima Media to broadcast a COVID-19 and Gender Impacts Talk Show; worked with the Asia-Pacific Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group on Myanmar language COVID-19 gender impact advocacy and awareness-raising briefs, and provided translations into Kachin, Karen and Shan languages, as well as sign language and braille; and procured protection equipment to donate to the Ministry of Health and Sports in the Yangon Region.

Rakhine: LIFT's implementing partners were providing essential hygiene and protective items, access to water and hand washing facilities. Items were being delivered in Rakhine despite ongoing armed clashes and lockdowns. USD 540,000 from existing projects was redirected to the COVID-19 response and interventions were expected to reach about 90,000 individuals in 9 townships (Sittwe, Pauktaw, Myebon, Minbya, Thandwe, Gwa, Kyaukphyu, Buthidaung, Maungdaw) in April and May.

Nutrition: Existing resources through ongoing projects delivered immediate actions related to COVID-19. These mainly related to awareness raising, provision of hygiene and protective items and in some cases access to clean water through the provision of water facilities. Budget adjustments for Save the Children, KMSS, Nyen Shalom, World Concern, CDN and The Border Consortium (TBC) for peri-urban areas, Kachin and the South-East. Save the Children and TBC received additional budgets to address the needs of migrant workers in the garment sector and on the South-East border.

Agriculture: LIFT's agriculture project partners initiated a quick COVID response based on approved changes in their existing budgets. All partners collaborated closely with the local health departments and provide awareness-raising material, such as billboards, as well as personal protective equipment; 35,000 awareness-raising pamphlets and more than 360 personal protection kits were distributed.

LIFT's programmes' and projects' COVID-19 response was ongoing at the time this report was prepared. LIFT was also preparing plans for a medium-term response incorporating the Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems Programme and the Financial Inclusion Programme.



6

VALUE FOR MONEY

VALUE FOR MONEY

Value for money

Value for money (VfM) continues to be an important cross-cutting issue for LIFT's Fund Management Office and for the implementing partners. LIFT embeds the four principles for VfM: economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity in the adaptive management practices implemented by LIFT's programme teams.

In 2019, the VfM consultant engaged by LIFT prepared project-based VfM assessments providing examples of the methodology and rigour required and making recommendations on how to improve VfM assessments. Some partners now plan to do their own VfM assessments within their projects as well as across projects.

Programme-level value for money

Programme design starts with the development of the call for proposals and concept notes. The process allows a transparent and competitive tendering through open calls. The calls demand that budgets are linked with the Theory of Change to allow value for money (VfM) assessments to be conducted during the project's implementation. The call documents also include an annex with the VfM Guidelines. These guidelines are the standard to be followed when preparing the proposal documents.

As a minimum, the guidelines require an overview of the return on investment for the project overall and for specific components. This can be a monetary assessment or a sensitivity analysis when benefits cannot be monetised. Also required is the presentation of alternative approaches and a justification why the decision was made to present the approach in the proposal.

The guidelines also require information about the long-term benefits of the intervention and discussion of the interventions' sustainability, replicability and scalability.

Project-level value for money

In the 2019-2023 programme phase LIFT is striving to improve the use of VfM assessments in decision making, monitoring and reporting of projects' results.

The following sections describe how VfM is integrated in LIFT's processes to strengthen project and programme performance.

Value for money in the design and appraisal stages

The calls for proposals clearly define requirements on how value for money is integrated in the proposals, budgets and monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) plans. The appraisal of the submitted proposals therefore includes a value for money compliance checker looking into the following questions:

- » Is the budget sufficiently linked with the work plan and Theory of Change/measurement table to enable VfM assessments?
- » Are the planned metrics realistic and relevant to assess the expected outcomes?
- » Are the data collection plans and metrics aligned with the needs for continued assessment for VfM during project implementation?
- » Is the intervention replicable and scalable?
- » How does the project add value to the programme (component) in the region and LIFT overall?
- » What are the primary cost drivers of the project? How will they be followed up during implementation?
- » For selected components of the project, what are the expected economic benefits? (monetised if possible)

The goal is to create awareness about the importance of VfM before the project implementation stage and prepare the partners to report against VfM topics. Setting up the project structure at the beginning is important to enable partners to submit meaningful VfM reports.

While most applications provide answers to these questions, one requirement from the calls for proposals is often not considered. Most submissions do not present and discuss alternative approaches that might be feasible and explain why the submitted approach was selected.

In the Financial Inclusion Programme the VfM criteria are slightly different. Partners working with the Financial Regulatory Department (FRD) report monthly to LIFT and based on their activities have a different format for presenting VfM information. FMO assesses and compares results with the industry standard, e.g. costs for setting up offices in new areas, portfolio at risk (PAR), financial self-sustainability (FSS) or the amounts leveraged by the projects.

Value for money during project delivery

All partners are aware of the importance of VfM and report on their approaches and activities. The proposals and concept notes from 45 partners that were assessed in 2019 show they are engaged in VfM considerations at the design stage. Four partners submitted VfM assessments. Ten partners plan to conduct cross-project VfM assessments and project VfM assessments. This is in line with LIFT's M&E approach to focus less on project evaluations but to look at several projects in the same thematic area and conduct evaluations as a team across projects.

Table 6.1 Output

| | Target | Results | % of Target | Cost performance ratio (CPR) |
|---|--------|---------|-------------|------------------------------|
| # of HH using protected water source | 1,500 | 1,013 | 68% | 0.87 |
| # km motorbike path constructed | 40 | 23 | 59% | 0.86 |
| # Farmers with increased productivity and profitability through improved crop management products and practices | 25,275 | 31,293 | 123% | 1.1 |
| # beneficiaries with increased participation of communities in fisheries co-management | 35,705 | 155,905 | 437% | 4.55 |
| # of targeted mothers and other village members who attended SBCC activities | 42,020 | 37,628 | 90% | 0.9 |
| Mothers and caregivers adopt recommended childcare behaviours related to nutrition, WASH, early childhood development | 7,140 | 12,621 | 176% | 1.85 |

Most of the unit cost calculations show that partners have a good understanding of their work and the associated costs. The unit costs are close to the cost assumed during budget preparation. The International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) for example estimated unit costs of USD 13.12 to train farmers and increase their productivity. The actual figure is very close at USD 11.66 per farmer. Save the Children's BRIGHT SUN project estimated the costs for all social and behaviour change communication activities, including education sessions, information, materials, promotion campaigns and mother-to-mother support groups to be USD 19.41 per beneficiary. The actually incurred costs per beneficiary is USD 19.08. In cases where the unit costs are significantly lower than estimated the number of beneficiaries is usually much higher than expected. NAG for example assumes unit costs of USD 1.58 to increase participation of communities in fisheries co-management. Because the number of beneficiaries is more than four times higher than assumed when the budget was developed the unit costs are actually only USD 0.34 per beneficiary.

Projects engaging in Cost Performance Ratio calculations

In 2019, more projects used cost performance ratio (CPR) calculations to check their performance and cost drivers to identify challenges and opportunities to practice adaptive management. The CPR calculation monitors the efficiency of the project's work, i.e. how well funds are translated into results by comparing the result with the project budget and MEAL plan.

Value for money in financial inclusion projects

LIFT's value for money approach for financial inclusion centres on the performance of microfinance institutions (MFIs). The process of evaluating value for money is continuous throughout the project and is built into the monthly reporting of MFIs to the FRD and LIFT.

Economy assesses the degree to which inputs are being purchased in the right quantity and at the right price. Each project's budget is reviewed for accuracy and its fit with proposed activities, work plan, and expected outputs and outcomes. Since all MFI provide similar services their operations can easily be compared. In particular, human resources and office costs as a percentage of total budgets are compared across the microfinance projects.

For an MFI, **efficiency** measures how well the MFI is streamlining its operations. The key indicator is operational costs/average total assets.

- » In 2019, 95 per cent of LIFT-supported MFIs showed a decrease in operational costs/average total assets.
- » The 2018 average MFI operational costs/average total assets was 12.2, compared to 13.3 per cent in 2017, and 17.5 in 2016. The preliminary estimate for 2019 is just under 12 per cent. As a basis of comparison, the gold standard for MFIs worldwide is 10 per cent.

For MFIs, **effectiveness** measures the quality of outputs, and the sustainability of operations. The key indicators are portfolio at risk, operational and financial self-sufficiency.

- » LIFT MFIs loan portfolio at risk (PAR)—the proportion of the loan portfolio that is in arrears and therefore at risk of not being repaid—is less than 0.5 per cent. The best MFIs worldwide show a PAR of between 1 and 6 per cent.
- » The loan write-off is less than 0.1 per cent.
- » All LIFT MFIs achieved operational self-sufficiency already in 2017, and 96 per cent have now achieved financial self-sufficiency.

Equity measures the degree to which the results of MFI investments are equitably distributed. The key indicator used by LIFT is the Poverty Probability Index.

LIFT updated the Poverty Probability Index (PPI)⁹⁶ for Myanmar. New poverty information was made available by the government and World Bank that allowed for an updated PPI to be constructed.

The PPI is a high-quality poverty measurement tool that has the potential to provide significant value to MFIs seeking to adopt quantitative, evidence-based strategies for monitoring the poverty outreach objectives identified in their social mission. The PPI also allows MFIs to provide quantitative evidence of their poverty outreach.

MFIs received PPI training in the second half of 2019. All LIFT MFIs will use the new PPI starting from 2020, including the two digital financial services projects with Yoma Bank and Co-operative Bank. The PPI is a high-quality poverty measurement tool that has the potential to provide significant value to MFIs seeking to adopt quantitative, evidence-based strategies for monitoring the poverty outreach objectives identified in their social mission. The PPI also allows MFIs to provide quantitative evidence of their poverty outreach.

Value for money considerations in LIFT's Rakhine programme

The situation in Rakhine and other conflict-affected areas results in higher than usual operating costs. LIFT's current work in many areas of Rakhine, cannot be as transformative, catalytic, or cost effective as it used to be, or as it is in other geographic areas. LIFT's work in Rakhine, and possibly in other areas affected by conflict, straddles humanitarian work and development. VfM considerations cannot be the same for both. Rakhine partners work in a complex environment with a multitude of problems associated with displacement, conflict and restriction of movement. LIFT acknowledges these problems and provides regular visits to the field to support partners in their practice of adaptive management to enable the projects to reach their targets.

Save the Children's cash for work approach in Rakhine is a good example of how multiple results can be achieved with one activity. The support costs for this activity are low and the cash contributes to the capacity of the households to access consumption and productive goods and indirectly reduces migration by providing an alternative source of income at times of labour scarcity. The value of the new or repaired infrastructure (fencing, ponds, and road renovation) are part of the communities' assets. Instead of using a stand-alone intervention with no follow up the project did not only inject cash in the local economy but also improved important community assets and included official counterparts who will oversee future maintenance work of these assets.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) project facilitated the establishment of the first skills assessment centre in the state. Originally the hotels and tourism skills assessment centre was planned to be housed at the government technical institute where sustaining staff salaries and management was projected to be problematic. The project took a strategic approach to establishing the skills assessment centre with leadership and management by the private sector securing sustainability and piloting an approach that can be scaled up by the private sector.

⁹⁶ previously known as the Progress out of Poverty Index

Other approaches providing value for money in Rakhine include:

- » The current project design is based on previous experiences in Rakhine. The budgeted and actual costs are almost identical, indicating a good understanding of the local environment where the projects operate
- » Projects share costs with other projects and use internal resources
- » Materials are procured locally
- » Investment in local business development
- » Interventions are designed based on feedback from beneficiary communities and township authorities
- » Designed to leverage contributions from public and private sector funding sources to support the projects and partnering with local authorities and promoting local ownership

Value for money considerations for other conflict-affected areas

Projects in conflict-affected areas use a variety of approaches to improve their performance. If possible, they leverage their activities with other funding sources and establish meaningful and documented engagements with government, the private sector and civil society. BBC Media Action for example provided free airtime for weekly radio content and was able to use resources from other funding sources to support their activities.

In conflict-affected areas, access to beneficiaries is essential to achieving any results. If the project team cannot access the target villages, LIFT's Fund Management Office conducts value for money analysis to check the expenditures on staff, operations and programme activities to compare with the achieved results. LIFT takes into account the possibilities that the limiting regulations may change again in the future, but the implementing partner also needs to be responsive to suggestions to changes that reduce costs and look for alternative implementation modalities. If this is not the case LIFT will suspend projects if necessary.

To implement projects in conflict-affected areas LIFT prefers to work with partners that already work in the same area and have established working relationships with the local stakeholders. Projects proposed for those areas are considered of value if the applicants have good knowledge of the context and past experience working there and if local partners and civil society organisations are already working in the villages. LIFT needs to be assured that a wide

range of different stakeholders have been consulted before the project and that beneficiaries include all minority groups and the most vulnerable. Additional considerations are given to established relationships with relevant government and non-state actors, as well as the conflict sensitivity of the proposed approaches. Although these considerations are not monetised value, they are important to getting projects off to a good start and assure LIFT that the partners will successfully see the implementation through to the end.

Value for money in policy projects

Policy projects are inherently long-term projects or belong to long-term programmes. The results will not appear in a linear fashion and cannot easily be quantified. There are setbacks and detours to be considered that delay results, but as long as the objective is feasible the work continues. This may result in expenditure will little visible change. While regular value for money analysis would consider this poor value for money, it is in fact just one step in a long-term commitment.

Results in policy work are often not defined by quantitative indicators. In many cases the achievement will only be realised after the end of the project, even if the project was the main driver for the change. Value for money in policy projects therefore needs to consider the attributability of the work in a complex environment. Projects have limited control over the multitude of stakeholders in policy making.

When discussing value for money in policy projects LIFT also considers catalytic or additive effects e.g. investment of other donors and the private sector in the same policy area.

In cases where investment in policy change continues but evidence of change is slow and not widespread the main reasons to continue are if the project is protecting people, the focal area is too important to leave and a comprehensive risk assessment has been done and the project accepts the risk.

External value for money analysis of projects

In 2019, LIFT conducted two full value for money project assessments in collaboration with the implementing partners. The assessment considered the following topics:

- » **Economy:** How well are the costs managed?
- » **Relevance:** How well is the project designed to achieve results?
- » **Efficiency:** How well are resources used to deliver outputs?
- » **Effectiveness:** Does the project deliver sustained outputs and contribute to LIFT outcomes?
- » **Equity:** Can outputs and services provided be accessed and used by all parts of the populations (eg. gender, age, displaced or different socio-economic backgrounds)

The project value for money assessments were conducted according to the following topics and questions.⁹⁷

The Save the Children LEGACY project that conducted a randomised control trial on maternal and child cash transfers in the Dry Zone was rated very positively, collecting the right information and presenting it clearly. The MEAL plan was comprehensive and well-integrated with the Theory of Change and budget structure. It was clear how the project contributed to LIFT's results. The policy tracking tool utilised the LIFT VfM indicators that take into considering the small steps that are usually made through advocacy action and the timeframe needed to achieve real change.

The second value for money assessment looked at a project with less experienced staff and management. This, and the lack of understanding of the MEAL process, resulted in data gaps and errors. Although the project monitored cost drivers, missing was the comparison of the cost drivers with the results e.g. the value of the productivity increase.

A big challenge when conducting value for money analysis with less experienced partners is developing an accurate approach to connect and allocate relevant financial data with results.

Table 6.2 Value for money Lines of Inquiry Matrix

| VFM Factor | VFM Metric | Description |
|---------------|--|--|
| Planning | VfM analysis of proposed intervention-planning and Business Case | Assess VfM of proposed and alternate interventions: planning stage |
| Economy | % management and overhead vs. total programmable cost | Calculate total management / overhead vs. total program cost: global and CO level |
| Economy | Cost-driver analysis | Identify / quantify key factors that drive costs; close monitoring controls costs |
| Efficiency | Results vs. targets Indicator | Calculate and trend results achieved vs. targets by indicator |
| Efficiency | Expenditure vs. budget by indicator | Calculate and trend expenditure vs. budget by indicator |
| Efficiency | Unit-cost analysis | Unit-cost for key outputs, compared across time/location strengthen planning, partner negotiations |
| Efficiency | Cost-performance ratio (CPR) by indicator | Calculate ratio of achievements vs. ratio of expenditure, determines results efficiency |
| Effectiveness | Outcome level CPR | Calculate the cost-results ratio of Outcomes |
| Effectiveness | Catalytic benefits and Sustainability Analysis | Calculate value lost/gained by unused Outputs; calculate benefits of further investment |
| Equity | Beneficiary equity analysis | Disaggregated beneficiaries by gender (minimum), age, social identifier, region, etc. |

⁹⁷ based on VfM Lines of Inquiry Matrix prepared by LIFT's VfM consultant for project VfM assessments in 2019

Based on the budget template this requires detailed financial mapping of budget lines to targets and results. Calculation errors in the spreadsheets and data gaps required detailed discussions with partners and delayed the reports. The lessons from these assessments were:

- » In cases when the benefits cannot be monetised a sensitivity analysis should compare approaches to support decision making.
- » The current budget template for LIFT projects makes it difficult to understand how funds will contribute to achieving results. The value for money concept links expenditure with results therefore results-based budgeting is more favourable for the task.
- » Often project indicators are process oriented and do not cover results well enough to engage in value for money analysis. Indicators should be relevant to the VfM analysis and be explained in indicator reference sheets in each project.
- » Projects often do not provide the evidence for the claimed improvements based on pathways, e.g. crop specific margin calculations.

Projects conducting value for money analysis

The World Fish My Culture project tested different small-scale aquaculture systems in the Delta and Dry Zone. By the end of piloting phase, the project assessed farmers' performances in terms of profitability and production and compared the performance of the different pond systems: Chan Myaung pond, and WISH pond. The gross margin, net profit and benefit cost ratios were calculated to evaluate the production performance of the aquaculture technologies studied. The findings reflected less potential for WISH ponds in the Dry Zone unless farmers had access to good water sources. Considering the analysis results the project decided to not scale-up the WISH pond systems.

The mid-term review of the BRIGHT SUN project implemented by Save the Children suggested to lower the high staffing costs by disbursing the MCCT grants through mobile money channels. The new approach was tested with the private sector company WAVE Money in 30 per cent of the target villages. The test showed that digital money transfer was a more cost effective and easy to manage approach to cash transfers. Pilots with the same results were implemented by HelpAge in the Dry Zone to disburse social pensions and disability grants.

Outlook

Although some improvements can be seen a lot more needs to be done. LIFT will hire a value for money specialist as a retainer to train partners and LIFT staff in the concepts, analysis and use of value for money information. LIFT will not outsource and automate the value for money analysis process but will keep the work in house and focus on training partners to report relevant information and enable them to conduct simple value for money analysis themselves.

The focus will be to operationalise value for money thinking at all levels of LIFT and sensitise staff and partners to base adaptive management on VfM considerations.



7

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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1. LIFT PROJECT LOCATIONS

In 2019, LIFT worked in 14 states/regions, 69 districts, 269 townships across the country. Eighteen projects are implemented nationwide

| | No. of Townships | No. of Districts | No. of States/regions |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Total reached during LIFT operation | 288 | 72 | 14 |
| Current operational in year 2019 | 269 | 69 | 14 |

LIFT total reached from year 2010 to 2019

| State/Region | District | Townships |
|--------------|------------|---|
| Ayeyarwady | Hinthada | Hinthada, Ingapu, Kyangin, Lemyethna, Myanaung, Zalun |
| | Labutta | Labutta, Mawlamyinegyun |
| | Maubin | Danubyu, Maubin, Nyaungdon, Pantanaw |
| | Myaungmya | Einme, Myaungmya, Wakema |
| | Pathein | Kangyidaunt, Kyaunggon, Kyonpyaw, Ngapudaw, Pathein, Thabaung, Yegyí |
| | Pyapon | Bogale, Dedaye, Kyaiklat, Pyapon |
| Bago | Bago | Bago, Daik-U, Kawa, Kyauktaga, Nyaunglebin, Shwegyin, Thanatpin, Waw |
| | Taungoo | Htantabin, Kyaukkyi, Oktwin, Phyu, Taungoo, Yedashe |
| | Pyay | Padaung, Paukhaung, Paungde, Pyay, Shwedaung, Thegon |
| | Thayarwady | Gyobingauk, Letpadan, Minhla, Monyo, Nattalin, Okpho, Thayarwady, Zigon |
| Chin | Falam | Falam, Tedim, Tonzang |
| | Hakha | Hakha, Thantlang |
| | Mindat | Kanpetlet, Matupi, Mindat, Paletwa |

| State/Region | District | Townships |
|--------------|------------|---|
| Kachin | Bhamo | Bhamo, Mansi, Momauk, Shwegu |
| | Mohnyin | Hpakant, Mogaung, Mohnyin |
| | Myitkyina | Chipwi, Injyangyang, Myitkyina, Waingmaw |
| | Putao | Machanbaw, Nawngmun, Putao, Sumprabum |
| Kayah | Bawlake | Bawlake, Hpasawng, Mese |
| | Loikaw | Demoso, Hpruso, Loikaw, Shadaw |
| Kayin | Hpa-An | Hlaingbwe, Hpa-An, Thandaunggyi |
| | Hpapun | Hpapun |
| | Kawkareik | Kawkareik, Kyainseikgyi |
| | Myawaddy | Myawaddy |
| Magway | Gangaw | Gangaw, Saw |
| | Magway | Chauk, Magway, Myothit, Natmauk, Taungdwingyi, Yenangyaung |
| | Minbu | Minbu, Ngape, Pwintbyu, Salin, Sidoktaya |
| | Pakokku | Myaing, Pakokku, Pauk, Seikphyu, Yesagyo |
| | Thayet | Aunglan, Kamma, Mindon, Minhla, Sinbaungwe, Thayet |
| Mandalay | Kyaukse | Kyaukse, Myittha, Sintgaing, Tada-U |
| | Mandalay | Amarapura, Aungmyaythazan, Chanayethazan, Chanmyathazi, Mahaaungmyay, Patheingyi, Pyigyitagon |
| | Meiktila | Mahlaing, Meiktila, Thazi, Wundwin |
| | Myingyan | Myingyan, Natogyi, Ngazun, Taungtha |
| | Nyaung-U | Kyaukpadaung, Nyaung-U |
| | Pyinoolwin | Madaya, Mogoke, Pyinoolwin, Singu |
| | Yamethin | Pyawbwe, Yamethin |
| Mon | Mawlamyine | Chaungzon, Kyaikmaraw, Mawlamyine, Mudon, Thanbyuzayat, Ye |
| | Thaton | Bilin, Kyaikto, Paung, Thaton |

| State/Region | District | Townships |
|--------------|------------|---|
| Nay Pyi Taw | Det Khi Na | Det Khi Na Thi Ri , Lewe, Pyinmana, Za Bu Thi Ri |
| | Oke Ta Ra | Oke Ta Ra Thi Ri , Poke Ba Thi Ri, Tatkon, Zay Yar Thi Ri |
| Rakhine | Kyaukpyu | Ann, Kyaukpyu, Munaung, Ramree |
| | Maungdaw | Buthidaung, Maungdaw |
| | Mrauk-U | Kyauktaw, Minbya, Mrauk-U, Myebon |
| | Sittwe | Pauktaw, Ponnagyun, Rathedaung, Sittwe |
| | Thandwe | Gwa, Thandwe, Toungup |
| Sagaing | Kale | Kale, Mingin |
| | Kanbalu | Kanbalu, Kyunhla, Taze, Ye-U |
| | Katha | Indaw, Katha, Tigyaing |
| | Mawlaik | Paungbyin |
| | Monywa | Ayadaw, Budalin, Chaung-U, Monywa |
| | Sagaing | Myaung, Myinmu, Sagaing |
| | Shwebo | Khin-U, Shwebo, Tabayin, Wetlet |
| | Tamu | Tamu |
| | Yinmarbin | Kani, Pale, Salingyi, Yinmarbin |

| State/Region | District | Townships |
|--------------|----------------|---|
| Shan | Kengtung | Kengtung |
| | Monghsat | Mongton |
| | Tachileik | Monghpyak, Tachileik |
| | Hopang | Hopang, Pangwaun |
| | Kyaukme | Hsipaw, Kyaukme, Manton, Namhsan, Namtu, Nawngkhio |
| | Lashio | Hseni, Kunlong, Lashio, Tangyan |
| | Laukkaing | Laukkaing |
| | Mongmit | Mongmit |
| | Muse | Kutkai |
| | Langkho | Mongnai |
| | Loilen | Kyethi, Laihka, Loilen, Mongkaing |
| | Taunggyi | Hopong, Hsihseng, Kalaw, Lawksawk, Nyaungshwe, Pekon, Pindaya, Pinlaung, Taunggyi, Ywangan |
| | Tanintharyi | Dawei |
| Kawthoung | | Kawthoung |
| Myeik | | Myeik, Palaw, Tanintharyi |
| Yangon | Yangon (East) | Botahtaung, Dagon Myothit (East), Dagon Myothit (North), Dagon Myothit (Seikkan), Dagon Myothit (South), Dawbon, Mingalartaunmyunt, North Okkalapa, Pazundaung, South Okkalapa, Tamwe, Thaketa, Thingangyun, Yankin |
| | Yangon (North) | Hlaingtharya, Hlegu, Hmawbi, Htantabin, Insein, Mingaladon, Shwepyithar, Taikkyi |
| | Yangon (South) | Dala, Kawhmu, Kayan, Kungyangon, Kyauktan, Seikgyikanaungto, Thanlyin, Thongwa, Twantay |
| | Yangon (West) | Ahlon, Bahan, Dagon, Hlaing, Kamaryut, Kyauktada, Kyeemyindaing, Lanmadaw, Latha, Mayangone, Pabedan, Sanchaung |

ANNEX 2: LIFT LOGFRAME

Purpose level outcome – 1-1: Improved nutritional status, particularly of women and children

I-1.1 %/# of households in LIFT areas with an acceptable household dietary diversity score

This indicator measures the total number of households in LIFT villages with a dietary diversity score of at least 6 (6 out of 12 food groups). This indicator is based on the Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) methods of the Food And Nutrition Technical Assistance (FANTA) for measuring households' access to food as well as the socio-economic level of the household.

I-1.2 % of moderately/ severely stunted children under 5 years in LIFT areas

This indicator measures the percentage of children under the age of five (0-59 months) in LIFT villages who are either moderately or severely stunted. Stunting is defined as a height that is more than two standard deviations below the World Health Organization (WHO) child growth standards median.

I-1.3 % of women of reproductive age (15-49 years) in LIFT areas achieving minimum dietary diversity

This indicator measures the percent of women of reproductive age, defined as those women from 15-49 years of age, in LIFT intervention areas achieving minimum dietary diversity. MDD-W is a dichotomous indicator of whether or not women 15-49 years of age have consumed at least five out of ten defined food groups the previous day or night.

Purpose level outcome 1-2 Increased household income and assets with greater control by women

I-2.1 % of households in LIFT areas below the international extreme poverty line

This indicator measures the percentage of households in LIFT villages that are below US\$ 1.90 per day per capita poverty line based on a detailed analysis of consumption and expenditure and adjusted for inflation and PPP (Purchasing Power Parity).

I-2.2 %/# of households in LIFT areas with increased income

This indicator measures the total number of households in LIFT villages reporting an increase in income from any source during the previous 12 months. It is based on perceptual data.

I-2.3 %/# of households in LIFT areas with increased asset ownership

This indicator measures the total number of households in LIFT villages who reported an increase

in asset ownership during the last 12 months. It is based on perceptual data.

I-2.4 % of male-headed households in LIFT areas in which women report at least equal control over assets and income

This indicator measures the degree of women's input into decisions about the use of income and assets generated from the productive/generating activities undertaken at the household, as well as the extent to which women feel they can make their own personal decisions regarding wage or salaried employment. Measurement is based on the Women Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI).⁹⁸

Purpose level outcome 1-3 Reduced vulnerability of households and individuals to shocks, stresses and risks

I-3.1 Prevalence of moderate and severe food insecurity in LIFT areas, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)

This indicator measures the share of LIFTs households that have experienced moderate and severe food insecurity based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES). As per the SDG definition, Food insecurity is associated with the inability to access safe, nutritious and sufficient food regularly.

I-3.2 %/# of people in LIFT areas whose resilience has been improved and ability to cope has increased

This indicator measures the number of individuals whose resilience has improved as a function of positive changes in income, assets and food availability. It is based on perceptual data.

I-3.3 %/# of households in LIFT areas categorized as vulnerable

This indicator measures the number of households with a score of 3 or more based on LIFTs 10 Umbrella indicators (dependency, debt, expenditure, livelihood diversity, food security, water & sanitation, health, social capital and decision making). Overall, vulnerability at the household level is based on having three or more of the 10 ten factors classified as 'vulnerable' based on the score of more than one standard deviation from the population mean.

I-3.4 % of informal employment in non-agriculture employment in LIFT areas

This indicator measures the share of non-agricultural employment which is classified as informal employment in LIFT areas. Employment is defined as all persons of working age who, during a short reference period (one week), were engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit.

⁹⁸ Sabina Alkire et. al. (2013); The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index pp. 73-74.

Nutrition indicators

Nutrition policy level

NP 1 New and/or improved gender-responsive public sector policies, programmes and expenditures that support:

Multi Sectoral National Plan of Action for Nutrition (MS-NPAN) at the national or sub-national level (including SBCC for MICYN, IMAM scale-up, food fortification, and the ADS nutrition-sensitive agriculture component).

National Social Protection Strategic Plan (NSPSP) at the national or sub-national level (including nutrition-sensitive and conflict-sensitive MCCT, social pensions, people with disabilities)

NP- 1.1 # of changes to nutrition related public sector policies and programmes supported by LIFT

This indicator measures contributions to policy reforms, new policies, legislative amendments, new laws or by-laws, and new public sector programmes or programme revisions in nutrition including implementation of national plans, resulting from deliberate advocacy efforts and/or policy/legislative/programming activities carried out by LIFT or LIFT implementing partners. All such new/improved policies and programmes should be gender responsive.

NP- 1.2 # of changes in nutrition related public sector budget allocation/spending supported by LIFT

This indicator measures the numbers of significant additional budget allocations, adjustments or spending in nutrition that result from deliberate advocacy efforts and sector budgeting and planning support from LIFT or its IPs. All new or modified budget allocations or spending should be gender responsive

NP-1.3 # of LIFT-supported nutrition related policy-oriented events organized

This indicator measures the number of policy-oriented events organized by LIFT or its IPs designed to provide information and evidence in order to promote/advocate policy reforms, new policies, legislative amendments, new laws or by-laws, and new public sector programmes or programme revisions to support nutrition outcomes for vulnerable populations.

NP-1.4 # of LIFT-supported nutrition related policy-oriented publications provided to key policy makers

This indicator measures policy oriented publications related to policy reforms, new policies, legislative amendments, new laws or by-laws to support positive nutrition outcomes for vulnerable populations provided to key policy makers by LIFT IPs.

Nutrition system level

Outcome NS 1- increased quality and coverage of nutrition interventions:

NS-1.1 # of individuals reached with LIFT supported nutrition-specific interventions

This indicator measures the number of individuals who have been reached with one of any of the LIFT supported nutrition-specific interventions. Nutrition specific interventions address the immediate causes of malnutrition, which are inadequate dietary intake and disease

NS-1.2 # of individuals reached with LIFT supported nutrition-sensitive interventions

This indicator measures the number of unique individuals who have been reached with LIFT supported nutrition-sensitive interventions, through any available direct channel. These channels include activities by primary health care workers, community health workers or volunteers, support groups, local authorities, extension agents or other non-health personnel. Nutrition sensitive interventions address the underlying and basic causes of undernutrition.

NS 1.3 %/# of households in LIFT areas reporting year round availability of drinking water from improved water sources on premises

This indicator measures the percent and number of households that have access to an improved drinking water source, from which they can obtain sufficient and safe water for drinking and domestic use, on premises, and available when needed throughout the year

Nutrition household level

Nutrition outcome-1 Increased adoption of improved nutrition, dietary, sanitation and hygiene practices.

NH-1.1% of children under 6 months in LIFT areas who are exclusively breastfed

This indicator measures the number of children under 6 months (that is, 0-5 months of age) in LIFT villages who were exclusively breastfed during the previous 24 hours at the time of survey. Exclusive breastfeeding means that the infant received breast milk only (including milk expressed or from a wet nurse), but did not receive any other food or liquid, including water

NH-1.2 % of children 6-23 months in LIFT areas with minimum acceptable diet (apart from breast milk).

This indicator measures the percentage of children 6–23 months of age who receive a minimum acceptable diet, apart from breast milk. The MAD indicator measures both the minimum feeding frequency and minimum dietary diversity, as appropriate for various age groups

NH-1.3# / % of households in LIFT areas using (a) safely managed sanitation services and (b) a hand-washing facility with soap and water.

The first component of the indicator (a) tracks the percentage of population using safely managed sanitation services. The second component (b) tracks the percentage of population with basic handwashing facilities in the home, where the presence of a handwashing facilities is used as a proxy for handwashing behaviour.

NH-1.4 %/# of households in LIFT areas using improved drinking water on premises

This indicator measures the number of households that utilise an improved drinking water source, which provides sufficient and safe water for drinking and domestic use, is located on premises, and is available when needed

NH-1.5 % of women who are involved in child health & nutrition decisions individually or jointly

This gender-sensitive indicator measures how women (15 years or older) with children under five years of age usually make child health and nutrition decisions. Women 15 years or older who are identified through the household roster as being a parent of a child under five years of age are selected to respond to the set of questions related to this indicator.

Financial inclusion indicators

Financial inclusion policy level

FP-1: Financial inclusion policy level: New and/or improved gender-responsive public sector policies, programmes, and expenditure

FP-1.1 # of changes in FI related public sector policies and programmes supported by LIFT

This indicator measures significant contributions to policy reforms, new policies, legislative amendments, new laws or by-laws, and substantive new public sector programmes or programme revisions that support MFI's, Support MOPF's implementation of the National Saving Mobilization Policy and support the revision of micro-insurance regulation and practice to better serve MFI clients.

Indicator FP-1.3 # of LIFT supported FI related policy oriented events organized

This indicator measures the number of policy-oriented events organized by LIFT or its IPs designed to provide information and evidence in order to promote/advocate policy reforms, new policies, legislative amendments, new laws or by-laws, and substantive new public sector programmes or programme revisions aimed at promoting financial inclusion.

FP -1.4 FP-# of LIFT supported FI related policy oriented publications provided to key policy makers

This indicator measures policy oriented publications related to policy reforms, new policies, legislative amendments, new laws or by-laws seeking to promote financial inclusion that have been disseminated to key policy makers by LIFT FMO, as well as by LIFT-supported IPs.

Financial inclusion systems level

FS -1 Increased institutional capacity for provision of inclusive and socially responsible financial services

FS-1.1 %/# of LIFT supported MFIs financially self-sustaining

This indicator measures the number of MFIs (Microfinance Institutions) supported by LIFT that are financially self-sustaining. A MFI is financially self-sufficient when the MFI's annual income is more than annual operating expenses and financial expenses.

FS-1.2 %/# of LIFT supported MFIs operating efficiently

This indicator measures the number of MFIs supported by LIFT that are operating efficiently in using its resources (assets and personnel).

FS-1.3 # of individuals with access to LIFT supported financial services (individual clients)

This indicator measures number of households of which at least one family member is registered as a member of a MFI, cooperatives and/or banks supported by LIFT. In financial terms, it is called "active client".

FS-1.4 Value of private sector investment leveraged (USD)

This indicator measures the value of private sector investment leveraged whether directly through micro finance institutions or commercial banks or investors (private sector co-financing through LIFT supported private sector engagement projects).

Financial inclusion household level

FH-1: Increased utilization of socially responsible and sustainable financial services

FH-1.1 # of clients using micro, small and medium enterprise loans from LIFT supported MFIs and banks

This indicator measures the number of client using loans for Agriculture, Small Business (Less than 500,000 MMK), Medium Business (More than 500,000 MMK) from LIFT supported MFIs and Banks.

FH-1.2 Total value of loans disbursed by LIFT supported MFIs and banks (USD)

This indicator measures total loan portfolio disbursed by LIFT supported MFIs and Banks. The thrust of LIFT's work on microfinance is to expand access to inclusive financial services that can serve as a catalyst for inclusive economic development in Myanmar.

FH-1.3 % of clients of LIFT supported MFIs and banks who do not meet their loan repayment terms

This indicator measures the percentage of clients with Portfolio at Risk (PAR)

FH-1.4 % of individual households receiving LIFT supported financial services moving out of extremely poor/poor to near poor status over the last twelve months

This indicator measures the proportion of households moving into and out of poverty based on the international and national poverty lines in LIFT villages. Reporting will be based on an augmented version of the Poverty Probability Index (PPI). This index is based on a range of household characteristics, including expenditures and consumption of twenty important food and household products found to be predictive of poverty status in previous years

FH-2 Increased control of credit and savings by women

FH-2.1 %/# of households with women reporting equal or greater control over LIFT supported credit and savings.

This indicator is also based on WEAI and measures women's role in decision making about obtaining and use of credit and savings associated with LIFT's financial inclusion services. Whereas participation in at least one decision concerning credit and savings is considered adequate, equal or greater control implies that the women must report having participated on all or a majority of the decisions.

Agriculture, markets and food systems indicators

AFMS policy level

AP-1: New and/or improved gender-responsive public sector policies, programmes, and expenditure that support: Implementation of the ADS and MoALI's contribution to MS-NPAN; Inclusive value chains; Inclusive, nutrition-sensitive crop, livestock and aquaculture practices; Inclusive climate-smart crop, livestock, and aquaculture practices; Land tenure security for small smallholder farmers and Natural resource management.

AP-1.1:# of changes to agriculture related public sector policies and programmes supported by LIFT

This indicator measures significant contributions to policy reforms, new policies, legislative amendments, new laws or by-laws, and substantive new public sector programmes or programme revisions in agriculture, land administration, or natural resource management resulting from deliberate advocacy efforts and/or policy/legislative/programming support from LIFT IPs. All such new/improved policies and programmes must be, where relevant, gender responsive, nutrition sensitive and climate smart.

AP-1.2: # of changes in agriculture, NRM and land administration related public sector budget allocation/spending supported by LIFT

This indicator measures the numbers of significant additional budget allocations or spending in agriculture, NRM and land administration that result from deliberate advocacy efforts, and sector budgeting and planning support, from LIFT or its IPs. All new budget allocations or spending must be, where relevant, gender responsive, nutrition sensitive and climate smart.

AP-1.3: # of LIFT-supported agriculture, NRM and land administration related policy-oriented events organized

This indicator measures the number of policy-oriented events organized by LIFT or its IPs designed to provide information and evidence in order to promote/advocate policy reforms, new policies, legislative amendments, new laws or by-laws, and substantive new public sector programmes or programme revisions in agriculture, land administration, or natural resource management.

AP-1.4:# of LIFT-supported agriculture related policy oriented publications provided to key policy makers

This indicator measures policy oriented publications related to policy reforms, new policies, legislative amendments, new laws or by-laws in agriculture, land administration, or natural resource management provided to key policy makers by LIFT IPs. All such new/improved policies must be gender-responsive and, where relevant, nutrition-sensitive and climate-smart.

AFMS systems level

AS-1: Value chain actors promote inclusive, climate smart and nutrition-sensitive agriculture

AS-1.1: # of LIFT-supported value chain service providers (public, private, CSO) promoting inclusive, climate smart and nutrition-sensitive agricultural production

This indicator measures the number of agricultural service providers funded under LIFT that are supporting rural households in their agricultural

value chain activities. Value chain service providers can provide inputs and financial services, technical advice, market development, farmer organisational support, marketing services, mechanization, etc. They can be government agencies, NGOs/CSOs or private sector individuals, partnerships or companies. Services should be inclusive, gender responsive, climate-smart and nutrition sensitive.

AS-1.2: %/# of LIFT-supported input/service providers reporting business growth

This indicator measures business growth of input/service providers supported by LIFT. Business growth can be measured/defined in several ways, however this indicator is based on a simple way to quickly assess growth and for providers to report: the numbers of individuals receiving services or inputs. (In addition, this fits well with calculations for Indicator AS-1.3, below).

AS-1.3: # of individuals reached by LIFT-supported agricultural advisory services

This indicator measures the cumulative number of individuals reached by agricultural advisory services provided through a LIFT-supported IP intervention. Those individuals provided only with inputs (eg bags of fertilizer) are not included unless they also received associated agricultural advice. Agricultural advice can be delivered in many ways, including: direct extension to individuals at the village (either to individual farmers or groups), training courses (at village, village-tract, township level, training centre etc), farmer field schools, training conducted by trained village trainers (TOT approach) among others.

AS-1.4: # of value chain related decent jobs created for vulnerable individuals with LIFT support

This indicator measures the number of decent jobs created within the agricultural value chains supported under LIFT-funded interventions. Decent jobs are jobs '...that provide fair wages and working conditions, allow for freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining and do not permit forced and child labor or discrimination in respect to employment and occupation' (LIFT Strategy 2019-2023, p 32).

AFMS Household

AH-1: Increased production, income and food security through commercialisation and/or diversification of sustainable and nutrition-sensitive agriculture

AH-1.1: %/# of people reached by LIFT-supported advisory services using Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), inputs and technologies (including mechanisation)

This indicator measures the number and percentage of the persons who have been reached by agricultural

advisory services and who have adopted the improved technologies extended: GAP, inputs, improved technologies, mechanization etc. Agriculture includes crops (cash crops and subsistence/food crops), livestock, and fisheries.

AH-1.2: Area of cultivated land under Good Agricultural Practices in LIFT areas

This indicator measures the area of land in acres where GAP is being applied by farmers who have been supported by LIFT IPs who promote GAP through advisory/extension services. This does not require a GAP certification scheme to be in place, or that the producers or their agricultural products are certified under such a scheme.

AH-1.3: Average estimated value of agricultural production, consumed or sold, by households receiving LIFT-supported agricultural advisory services

This indicator measures the average annual value of agricultural production (in MMK) of a household reached by LIFT-supported advisory services. It covers the total value of household agricultural production whether sold, consumed, gifted, traded, shared or used to repay debts.

AH-1.4: #/% of LIFT-supported households reporting increased income from agricultural activities

This indicator measures the number of households reached by LIFT-supported advisory services who report increased income from agricultural activities since the commencement of the new strategy (2019).

AH-2: Increased control and decision-making over agricultural production and related income by women

AH-2.1: #/% of women in LIFT-supported households reporting equal or greater access, control and decision-making regarding agricultural production and related income

This indicator measures the number of women in households reached by LIFT-supported advisory services who report equal or greater access, control and decision-making regarding agricultural production and related income since the commencement of the new strategy (2019).

Decent work and labour mobility indicators

DP-1: New and/or improved gender-responsive public sector policies, programmes, and expenditure on: Labour rights and social protection (e.g., ratify C189, Violence Against Women Law, Social Security Law); Labour migration governance (e.g., Law Relating to Overseas Employment, Plan of Action on Labour Migration); Forced labour, child labour and anti-trafficking (e.g., Plan of Action on Forced Labour, Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law); Employment and skills development (e.g., Skills Development Law, TVET Law, National Occupational Competency Standards)

DP-1.1: # of changes to labour related public sector policies and programmes supported by LIFT

This indicator measures the changes that result from LIFT's work to support policy development and the implementation of government programmes on labour issues. The unit measure of "changes" is inclusive of the adoption of new policies and programmes, changes in the content or approach of existing policies and programmes and changes in the formulation process for policies and programme (e.g. social dialogue, establishment of working groups and committees, etc.).

DP-1.2: # of changes in labour related public sector budget allocation/spending supported by LIFT

This indicator measures the number of changes in labour-related public sector budget allocation or spending supported by LIFT. Its aim is to identify whether LIFT has contributed to increases or better targeting of public budget allocations and expenditures by state and non-state actors. This includes both changes in public budgets, as well as more efficient use of existing financial resources.

DP-1.3: # of LIFT supported labour-related policy-oriented events organised

This indicator measures the number of policy-oriented events organised, whether directly by LIFT or by its IPs. This includes all events that have a specific objective of supporting policy development or implementation. The term "events" is broadly defined and includes workshops, consultations, public campaigns, launch events, meetings, discussion forums, field visits or advocacy events whose aim is to influence policy processes, whether directly or indirectly.

DP-1.4: # of LIFT supported labour related policy oriented publications provided to key policy makers

This indicator measures the number of publications disseminated by the LIFT FMO, as well as by LIFT-supported IPs and initiatives that are intended to inform policy-processes. For the purposes of this indicator, "publications" are defined as written outputs which are produced in a medium to reach an external audience and which include policy-relevant content. It does not include video or social media communications or internal project management documents.

DWLM systems level

DS-1: Enhanced capacity of stakeholders to support decent work (including reducing the gender wage gap), labour mobility and anti-trafficking

DS-1.1: # of representatives of government, private sector, civil society, labour organizations and media trained with LIFT support on labour and social protection, safe migration and anti-trafficking.

This indicator measures the number of stakeholder representatives who participate in training with LIFT support. The subject of the training is broadly defined and inclusive of all issues relating to decent work and labour mobility, encompassing labour and social protection (including sexual harassment and gender-based violence), safe migration, anti-trafficking, skills development and other related topics. It also includes instrumental training that expands the capacity of relevant actors to engage more effectively with these issues (e.g. training on project management, monitoring and evaluation, communications, etc.).

DS-1.3: Amount of money awarded to workers for redress of grievances and fulfillment of benefit claims

This indicator tracks the money that is awarded to workers in relation to labour rights and human trafficking complaint cases filed. The subject of the cases is unrestricted and inclusive of all matters for which they have sought assistance from a LIFT-supported legal service providers. This includes complaints related to recruitment, wages and working conditions, terminations, workplace accidents, social protection benefit claims, sexual harassment, deaths while overseas and other issues.

DWLM household level

DH-1: Increased access to information, training and support services for women and men migrants and other vulnerable workers

DH-1.1: Number of individuals successfully completing LIFT supported skills development training

This indicator measures the total number of individuals reached through various types of non-farm livelihood trainings. This includes vocational skills trainings, enterprise/business development trainings and life/soft skills trainings meant to increase employability as well as other skills development topics. There is no predefined minimum or maximum length of time for the training.

DH-1.2: # of migrant workers and family members provided with LIFT supported information, training and support services on safe migration and/or financial literacy

This indicator captures the number of migrant workers and family members provided with information, training and services on safe migration or financial literacy. This includes a broad range of different types of services, including outreach, counselling, legal assistance, education, training, networking and organizing services. However, it does not include communications through media channels which do not provide for individualized engagement.

DH-1.3: # of survivors of trafficking provided with LIFT supported shelter and/or support services

This indicator measures the number of trafficked persons who receive safe shelter and services after their identification. Post-trafficking services are taken to be inclusive of all services provided to survivors with the objective of supporting their recovery and rehabilitation. Examples include temporary housing, trauma informed counselling, psycho-social support, healthcare, job matching, legal assistance, documentation and others related services.

DH 2 Expand opportunities for decent work particularly for workers who are at a heightened risk of exploitation and abuse.

DH-2.1: %/# of individuals successfully completing LIFT supported training who establish their own enterprises (including trafficking survivors)

This indicator measures the total number of trained individuals (DH-1.1) who establish their own small or medium enterprises. The businesses may be in any economic sector (including agriculture, industry or services), however, subsistence farming and fishing are not included.

DH-2.2: %/# of individuals employed six months after completing LIFT supported vocational skills training.

This indicator measures the total number of trained individuals (DH-1.1) who are employed six months after completing LIFT supported vocational skills training. The employment may be in any economic sector (agriculture, industry, services), however, own-account and contributing family workers are not included.

DH-2.3: %/# of individuals successfully completing LIFT supported training with increased income from their employment or enterprise.

This indicator measures the number of individuals that have achieved an increased income six months after completing vocational or enterprise development training. It is based upon the respondents' subjective perception of an increase in personal income and does not capture empirical data to quantify the change. It is inclusive of increases in income resulting from finding employment after previously being unemployed.

DH-2.4: % of individuals employed in a situation of forced labour within LIFT target areas.

This indicator measures the prevalence of individuals employed in a situation of forced labour within LIFT target areas. The determination of forced labour will be made through conducting household surveys that apply the ILO survey guidelines for estimating forced labour of adults. Extrapolation from the statistical data collected in the surveys will support a representative estimate of the prevalence of forced labour in LIFT target areas, including the dark figure of unidentified victims.

| Original indicator formulation | Revised/Modified indicator formulation |
|--|--|
| NS 1.3 # of households in LIFT areas with access to improved drinking water and sanitation facilities | %/# of households in LIFT areas reporting year round availability of drinking water from improved water sources on premise |
| NH-1.4 %/# of households in LIFT areas using safely managed drinking water services | %/# of households in LIFT areas using safely managed drinking water, which is available on premises |
| NH-1.5 % of men/women in union with children under two in LIFT areas who make child health and nutrition decisions jointly with spouse/partner | % Of women who are involved in child health & nutrition decisions individually or jointly |
| DS-1.1 # of representatives of government, private sector, civil society, labour organizations and media trained with LIFT support on labour and social protection, safe migration and anti-trafficking, by sex. | # Of stakeholder representatives trained to support decent work and labour mobility" |
| DS 1.2 # of private sector enterprises whose compliance with ethical code of conduct related to recruitment and employment practices is audited. | Proposal to drop still pending. Further research on suitable replacement ongoing. |
| DS-1.3 Amount of financial compensation awarded to workers for redress of grievances related to labour rights abuses and human trafficking. | "Amount of money awarded to workers for redress of grievances and fulfilment of benefit claims" |
| DH-1.1 # of individuals successfully completing LIFT supported training on technical and vocational skills and enterprise development | "# of individuals completing LIFT supported skills development training" |
| DH-1.2 # of migrant workers and family members provided with LIFT supported information, training and support services on safe migration and financial literacy | "# of migrant workers and family members provided with LIFT supported information, training and support services" |
| DH-2.4 % of individuals employed in a situation of forced labour within LIFT target areas | "% of employed individuals in a situation of forced labour within LIFT target areas" |

ANNEX 3: ONGOING PROJECTS IN 2019

| Sr. | Organisation/IP Name | New Theme | Budget (USD) | Project Title |
|-----|---|--|--------------|---|
| 1 | ActionAid (SECURE) | Decent Work | 2,500,000 | Safe Migration for Decent Work in the Peri-Urban Areas of Yangon (SECURE) |
| 2 | Adventist Development and Relief Agency – Myanmar (ADRA) | Decent Work | 2,200,000 | Vocational Education to Support IDPs and Host Communities (VESI) in Kachin and Northern Shan State: Sustainably Enhancing decent work opportunities and bridging the gap between the youth from IDP and vulnerable host communities |
| 3 | BRAC Microfinance Company LTD | Financial Inclusion and Private Sector (FI & PS) | 1,000,000 | Expansion of Financial Services to Conflict Affected Areas and Inclusion of People Displaced by Conflict, People with Disabilities, and Migrant Women in Peri-Urban Areas |
| 4 | BBC Media Action | Decent Work | 3,035,943 | Kyat Chat: Making the Most of Migration and Money |
| 5 | Canadian Cooperative Association (CCA) / Cooperative Development Foundation of Canada (CDF) | Financial Inclusion and Private Sector (FI & PS) | 3,200,000 | “Myanmar: Financial Inclusion Expansion through Co-operatives” (MyFINANCE) project |
| 6 | CARE | Decent Work | 5,985,643 | Aung Myin Hmu Project - Industry Solutions for Safe Employment |
| 7 | Catholic Relief Services (CRS) | Nutrition | 1,813,203 | Productive Agriculture through Community Engagement (PACE) |
| 8 | Choklei Organization for Rural and Agricultural Development (CORAD) | Agri, Markets & Food Systems | 2,903,201 | Promoting Agricultural Diversification and Economic Integration in Northern Chin State |
| 9 | Danish Refugee Council (DRC) | Decent Work | 3,500,000 | Vocational Training and Livelihood Opportunities for in Camp and out of Camp Youth in Rakhine State - Phase II |
| 10 | DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE | Nutrition | 1,500,000 | Implementation of a Grant in Myanmar provided by the Livelihoods and Food Security Fund |
| 11 | DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE | Nutrition | 1,290,264 | Support to DSW MCCT Programme in Kayin State |
| 12 | DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE | Nutrition | 447,586 | Support to DSW MCCT Programme in Kayah State |
| 13 | EDEN | Decent Work | 946,975 | Eden Project to Rescue Migrant Women and Girls who have been Trafficked into Sexual Exploitation in Yangon |
| 14 | Eden Centre for Disabled Children (ECDC) | Decent Work | 316,770 | Nothing About Us Without All of Us : Promoting disability inclusive Chin Society for sustainable development. |

| Sr. | Organisation/IP Name | New Theme | Budget (USD) | Project Title |
|-----|--|--|--------------|--|
| 15 | Gender Equality Network (GEN) | Decent Work | 2,372,165 | Deepening Commitment to Gender Equality in Myanmar |
| 16 | Golden Pearl | Decent Work | 149,996 | Improving the Socio-economic situation of the Person with Disability |
| 17 | GRET | Financial Inclusion and Private Sector (FI & PS) | 3,463,600 | Creating of a microfinance institution in the Dry Zone, Myanmar |
| 18 | HelpAge International | Decent Work | 3,640,000 | Strengthening the Ministry of Social Welfare to fulfil its Role in Expanding Social Protection |
| 19 | HelpAge International | Decent Work | 1,734,501 | Inclusive Social Protection and Livelihoods in Magway Region and Kayin State |
| 20 | International Fertilizer Development Centre (IFDC) | Agri, Markets & Food Systems | 6,256,564 | Dry Zone Agro-Input and Farm Services Project |
| 21 | International Labour Organisation (ILO) | Decent Work | 3,999,752 | Development of Internal and International Labour Migration Governance |
| 22 | International Labour Organisation (ILO) | Decent Work | 2,992,266 | Skills for Improvement of Livelihoods, Economic Opportunities and Security (TVET) |
| 23 | International Organisation of Migration (IOM) | Decent Work | 1,549,100 | Migration as a livelihood diversification strategy in the Delta (MILDAS) |
| 24 | International Organisation of Migration (IOM) | Decent Work | 12,944,520 | Increasing Developmental Impact of Labour Migration through Strengthened Governance and Partnership (G&P) (implemented by a Consortium) |
| 25 | International Organisation of Migration (IOM) | Decent Work | 1,182,313 | Strengthening the Resilience of Conflict-Affected Communities in Kachin and Northern Shan States through Increased Safe and Rewarding Migration (SAFE) |
| 26 | IRC | Agri, Markets & Food Systems | 13,500,000 | Tat Lan Sustainable Food Security and Livelihoods Programme Phase II |
| 27 | Karen Development Network (KDN) | Nutrition | 2,237,414 | Enhanced Livelihoods for Displaced People (ELDPP) |
| 28 | Karuna Mission Social Solidarity (KMSS) | Nutrition | 999,992 | Strategic Partnership for Civil Society Empowerment (SPaCE) |
| 29 | Karuna Mission Social Solidarity (KMSS) | Nutrition | 1,996,290 | Supporting Conflict Affected Women and Infants for Nutrition (SAFE WIN) |

| Sr. | Organisation/IP Name | New Theme | Budget (USD) | Project Title |
|-----|------------------------------------|--|--------------|--|
| 30 | Koe Koe Tech Co., Ltd. | Nutrition | 799,738 | Shwe Kayi Lan Bawga Maymay (Shwe maymay), 'Mommy who is on the golden journey' |
| 31 | Land Consulting Group Co., Ltd. | Agri, Markets & Food Systems | 2,317,566 | Fostering equitable access and control over land and related natural resources in Myanmar |
| 32 | Lodestar Company Ltd./ SPPRG | Decent Work | 374,991 | Inclusive Development by enabling Existing Actors (IDEA) Project |
| 33 | Mercy Corps | Agri, Markets & Food Systems | 5,188,197 | Linking Laputta to Markets (LLM) Increasing Incomes through Agriculture, Skills, & Employment |
| 34 | Metta Development Foundation | Agri, Markets & Food Systems | 2,123,168 | Uplands Food Security and Participation in Markets (UFS-PM) |
| 35 | Metta Development Foundation | Agri, Markets & Food Systems | 992,935 | A Strategic Partnership Proposal |
| 36 | Michigan State University | Agri, Markets & Food Systems | 4,940,354 | Agri-food Value Chain Development in Myanmar: Implications for Livelihoods of the Rural Poor |
| 37 | Myanma Awba Group (Awba) Co., Ltd. | Financial Inclusion and Private Sector (FI & PS) | 3,749,734 | Myanmar Allied Farmers Seed Company (MAFSCO)/Private Sector Engagement Program |
| 38 | Network Activities Group (NAG) | Agri, Markets & Food Systems | 1,024,651 | Improved Co-Management of Ayeyarwaddy Wetland Resources |
| 39 | Network Activities Group (NAG) | Agri, Markets & Food Systems | 2,970,862 | Reallocation and Development of Unused Concession Land |
| 40 | PATH | Nutrition | 4,659,426 | Introduction of Fortified Rice in Myanmar" Project |
| 41 | PATH | Nutrition | 1,999,861 | Smart Move: Enhancing migration transitions through urban food system innovations and peer directed services for migrant workers in Yangon |
| 42 | People in Needs | Decent Work | 3,158,950 | Aye Chan Thaw Ein - Empowering Labour Migrants in Shwe Pyi Thar |
| 43 | PGMF | Financial Inclusion and Private Sector (FI & PS) | 1,163,259 | Livelihood Improvement in Vulnerable Environment (LIVE) |
| 44 | Proximity Designs | Financial Inclusion and Private Sector (FI & PS) | 5,097,164 | Financial Inclusion—Moving Ahead |

| Sr. | Organisation/IP Name | New Theme | Budget (USD) | Project Title |
|-----|--|--|--------------|--|
| 45 | Proximity Designs | Financial Inclusion and Private Sector (FI & PS) | 800,000 | Financial Inclusion—Creating Opportunities |
| 46 | Relief International UK | Decent Work | 3,435,639 | Response Mechanism for Addressing Protracted Displacement in Rakhine State, Myebon and Mrauk U |
| 47 | RAFT | Decent Work/ Others | 500,000 | Support to Strengthen conflict sensitivity |
| 48 | Save the Children | Nutrition | 3,852,283 | Technical Assistance to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement's Chin Maternal and Child Cash Transfer Programme (TEAM MCCT) |
| 49 | Save the Children | Nutrition | 5,558,945 | Tat Lan Plus |
| 50 | Save the Children | Nutrition | 3,500,000 | Building Resilience In Conflict affected areas of Kachin and Shan States (BRICKS) |
| 51 | SPECTRUM - Sustainable Development Knowledge Network (SDKN), Myanmar | Nutrition | 290,327 | Unlocking the Future Growth Potential of the Edible Insect Sector in Myanmar |
| 52 | Stichting ZOA, The Netherlands (Registered as Consortium of Dutch NGOs (CDN) in Myanmar) | Nutrition | 4,840,000 | Improving the incomes and nutrition outcomes of rural poor in Northern Kayin State |
| 53 | SwissAid | Nutrition | 3,899,999 | Uplands Township Fund (Phase II) |
| 54 | The Border Consortium (TBC) | Nutrition | 4,096,894 | Sustainable Transformation for Agriculture, Nutrition and Development in Uplands (STAND UP) Phase II |
| 55 | Thitsar Ooyin (GRET) | Financial Inclusion and Private Sector (FI & PS) | 250,000 | Expanding Thitsar ooyin Financial Services towards vulnerable rural households in Chin State and Sagaing Region, Myanmar |
| 56 | UNCDF (CARD Myanmar COMPANY LIMITED (CMCL)) | Financial Inclusion and Private Sector (FI & PS) | 2,500,000 | Leaving no one behind |
| 57 | Vision Fund International | Financial Inclusion and Private Sector (FI & PS) | 3,500,000 | Financial Inclusion in Central Rakhine |
| 58 | Vision Fund International | Financial Inclusion and Private Sector (FI & PS) | 3,250,000 | Inclusive for Underserved Populations in Myanmar |
| 59 | Welthungerhilfe | Agri, Markets & Food Systems | 2,719,642 | Support to Rice Seed Sector Development in the Ayeyarwady Delta, Myanmar |

| Sr. | Organisation/IP Name | New Theme | Budget (USD) | Project Title |
|-----|--|--|--------------------|---|
| 60 | WFP | Nutrition | 387,380 | Scaling up fortified rice production and consumption through Myanmar |
| 61 | WFP | Nutrition | 297,813 | Engaging Businesses to deliver Government national nutrition strategies through SBN (SUN Business network) in Myanmar |
| 62 | Women's Organizations Network of Myanmar (WON) | Decent Work | 1,058,749 | Ending Vulnerability and Exploitation of Migrant Workers (EVE) |
| 63 | World Vision International Myanmar | Nutrition | 2,376,833 | Growing Livelihood in Bogale Project |
| 64 | World Vision International Myanmar | Decent Work | 2,584,741 | See, Hear, Empower (SHE): Supporting inclusive and transformative Livelihoods for IDP and Host Communities in Kachin |
| 65 | Yoma Bank | Financial Inclusion and Private Sector (FI & PS) | 18,070,000 | Yoma Bank Agri-Business Finance Program (Yoma Bank AFP) |
| 66 | Yoma Bank | Financial Inclusion and Private Sector (FI & PS) | 5,800,000 | Rural Women's Digital Finance Programme |
| | | | 203,788,159 | |

ANNEX 4: PROJECT UPDATES

Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems

| Sr. | IP, project title, timeframe, budget, status | Important updates |
|-----|--|--|
| 1. | <p>Project Name: Pyawt Ywar Pump Irrigation Rehabilitation</p> <p>Implementation Partner(s): International Water Management Institute (IWMI) (consortium lead), International Crop Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), National Engineering and Planning Services, and Welthungerhilfe (WHH) Myanmar</p> <p>Project duration: December 2016 / May 2019</p> <p>Budget and Expenditure: USD 1,158,797 / USD 1,144,409</p> <p>Project area: Myinmu township, Sagaing Region</p> <p>Status: Closed during the reporting period</p> | <p>Improved livelihoods through irrigation:</p> <p>M&E assessments have shown that the project has built the foundations for a more systematic approach to water allocation amongst farmers, with significantly greater capacity for oversight that is grounded in farmer participation and leadership.</p> <p>Over 70% of the farmers stated that they are or would be implementing agricultural practices from training or demonstrations that they received through project activities. The M&E results further suggest that some farmers might choose to grow sunflower and chilies and reduce the cultivation of rice and pulses if irrigation services in the non-monsoon season are adequate. The combination of water delivery services and the introduction of high value crops such as chili show high potential for farmers in the scheme to improve their livelihoods.</p> <p>Improved irrigation investment decisions</p> <p>The project provided insights and information on how to implement a bottom up approach to develop the institutional levels of a water user association (WUA) and how to incentivize farmers in growing high value low water demanding crops. To support IWUMD and local and international NGOs, IWMI has developed a handbook to guide the process of WUA design and implementation in line with Government of Myanmar's Participatory Irrigation Management (PIM) Guidelines.</p> <p>The project has handed over the tools, by-laws, crop manuals and handbooks to IWUMD to support WUA formation and agricultural diversification in the future. The final outreach activity of the project aimed at transferring the lessons learned and recommendations to all stakeholders in the scheme, at regional and national level.</p> |
| 2. | <p>Project Name: Pyawt Ywar Pump Irrigation Rehabilitation</p> <p>Implementation Partner(s): UNOPS</p> <p>Project duration: July 2016 - Dec 2019</p> <p>Budget and Expenditure: USD 3,870,874.00 / USD 3,748,043.53</p> <p>Project area: Myinmu Township, Sagaing Region, Myanmar</p> <p>Status: Closed during the reporting period.</p> | <p>The overall objective of the initiative was to rehabilitate irrigation infrastructure associated with the scheme to ensure the supply of water. The project addressed four outcomes that relate to the scheme and included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Outcome 1: Delivers the quantity of water required by irllts users when and where is needed » Outcome 2: Minimises the loss of water in the delivery system » Outcome 3: Is affordable to manage, operate, maintain and renew » Outcome 4: Monitors the quantity of water supplied to each farm. <p>The project commenced with a detailed identification and assessment of existing irrigation that was completed in November 2016. The assessment identified key areas that required attention and included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Remodelling of all canal systems including main, distributaries and minor with proper side slopes and gradient » Reshaping of all distributary and minor canals; Construction of additional lateral and field channels » Construction of service road with gravel/laterite on top for the entire length of the main canal, LMC and RMCs (8.66 miles); Replacement of all gates on water control structures (50 Nos) » Repairing of structures as indicated in survey data/inventory (25 nos); Renovation of the pump houses for PS2 and PS3 with the provision of sufficient equipment » Addition of 2 pumps at PS1 together with pontoon and electrical works, and 1 pumps add in PS2 » Construction of drainage network approximately 20 miles. |

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| | | <p>All designs were reviewed by government departments and the UNOPS Design Review team.</p> <p>In April 2017, UNOPS had informed IWUMD (then WRUD) and farmers on the need to close the operations of the scheme in order to undertake the remodelling or construction of canals, consequently only dry crops could be raised during this period.</p> <p>The scheme began its operation again in successive stages. On June 19, 2018, pump station 1 was opened for trials, while pump station 3 was initiated on July 7, 2018. Irrigation started in August, a few weeks later than planned, which caused some perturbation to planned monsoon crops. Finally, four distributary canals under pump station 2 were opened on September 1, 2018, and the remaining seven were fully opened in a phased approach between November 26 and December 10, 2018.</p> <p>With the implementation of above works, the performance of the canal system has been increased from 120 cusecs to 180 cusecs. It is also assumed that the frequent disruption of irrigation services will be minimized. The rehabilitation works have allowed to increase the capacity and effectiveness of the scheme.</p> |
| 3 | <p>Project Name: A short step from improved wash to healthier communities</p> <p>Implementation Partner(s): UN-Habitat</p> <p>Project duration; 1 January 2016 - 30 June 2019 (NCE)</p> <p>Budget and Expenditure: USD 4,400,000 / USD 4,368,626</p> <p>Project area: Yesagyo and Pakokku townships in Magway Region and Myingyan, Natogyi, Taungtha and Mahlaing townships in Mandalay Region</p> <p>Status: Closed during the reporting period</p> | <p>Over the reporting period all project implementation activities were completed in 221 villages from which 209 villages implemented water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) activities and only 12 villages implemented sanitation and hygiene activities as these villages had enough water sources to provide for the community.</p> <p>The achievements of the project were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The total number of beneficiaries (221 villages): HH 38,135 / Male 82,555 / Female 95,612 / Total 178,167 » Total water supply beneficiaries (209 villages): HH 36,140 / Male 78,190 / Female 90,466/Total 168,656. » Total pipe water supply system beneficiaries (186 villages): HH 28,927 / Male 63,695 / Female 72,699 / Total 136,394 » Community action plan (CAP) workshops were conducted and completed in all 221 villages. There were a total 20,940 individuals who attended and participated at the CAP workshops; most HHs were represented by one member who attended the workshop therefore this number (20,940) representing approximately 55% of the total 38,135 HHs of 221 villages. » Total 221 VWCs were formed with 1,770 members forming the committees, of which 45% were women. » During forty-two months of project implementation, 2,454 HPVs have been selected and provided with training in all 221 villages (there was no PHAST component in 9 additional villages under NCE, however it was implemented by the project team). Out of this total, 1,552 were women (63%). Some members of VWCs also attended the training sessions, therefore total number of trainees is 2,497 (64% women) |

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| 4 | <p>Project Name: Metta Strategic Partnership Project</p> <p>Implementation Partner(s): Metta Development Foundation</p> <p>Project duration: April 2017 - June 2020 (NCE)</p> <p>Budget and Expenditure: USD 992,935</p> <p>Project area: Metta project offices and Taunggyi / Shan state for training center.</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p> | <p>The initiative is one of the Strategic Partnerships of LIFT that has both research/implementation and capacity building elements that will enhance the capabilities and institutional elements of Metta. There are three outcomes that the initiative is attempting to achieve. These are:</p> <p>Outcome 1: Strengthen local resources in the area of agro-ecological and local development initiatives through the establishment of a learning centre for research and extension in Southern Shan state. Metta aims to create a platform to strengthen local capacity in agro-ecological practices and local development initiatives. By establishing a learning centre for agro-ecological research and extension services in Southern Shan state, Metta will be able to undertake research on ecological solutions to challenges faced by communities, disseminate findings, and to support communities as they apply their learnings to solve local development issues.</p> <p>Outcome 2: Strengthened internal accountability and transparency systems. Metta aims to strengthen its internal accountability and transparency systems primarily by building capacity and skills for its internal financial management system and improve its overall financial management infrastructure. In addition, Metta will strengthen its overall monitoring and evaluation system through capacity development and to expand its capabilities to include monitoring and evaluation capacity for value measurement in line with the development of a social enterprise.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Strengthened Metta policy level engagement and evidence based research processes. The strategic partnership between Metta and LIFT will focus on research and advocacy.</p> <p>Highlight for the reporting period: During the reporting period, Metta the design and tendering process for the construction of an agro-ecology centre. The centre includes the construction of three buildings and over the reporting period detailed design and construction costs were undertaken by a local architect who specialises in agro-ecological building design. A tender was launched in early December, and three companies were selected to undertake the civil works. Construction will commence in January 2020 and is scheduled for completion in June 2020.</p> <p>Metta continued to strengthen the M&E systems in the organization by developing MEAL framework and building the capacity of M&E staff. A financial system assessment was conducted with the support of an external consultant and the Finance team in Metta carried out further implementation of system development with the support software vendor and the consultant. This will provide a uniform finance system across the entire organization.</p> |

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| 5 | <p>Project Name: Upland Foods Security and Participating in Market (UFS PM)</p> <p>Implementation Partner: Metta</p> <p>Project duration : Jun 2016 – April 2020</p> <p>Project Budget: USD 2,123,168</p> <p>Project Area: Myitkyina, Waingmaw, Momauk (Kachin State), Namtu and Lashio townships (Northern Shan State).</p> <p>Status: On-going</p> | <p>UFS-PM project has two main components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The development of oil seeds (particularly mustard and peanut oil) value chains; » Natural Resources Management (NRM) through participatory NRM planning and Community Forest Certification. <p>During the reporting period, the following project activities were implemented and completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 6 cluster management committees (CMCs) (4 in Kachin and 2 in northern Shan) for the joint ownership and management of the six oil processing mills that were installed in 2017. The CMCs were restructured in 2018 through the establishment of Boards of Directors (BOD), whose members came from the producer groups (PG) » Business plans for 6 oil processing mills were completed » Start-up funding to the 6 mills were provided and the total amount was MMK 100 million. Start-up fund support to factories varied slightly between mills, based on the total amount of investment share capital and number of shareholders. » Share amounts invested by farmers in the oil business total MMK 56,650,000. » Among 26 NRM villages, 19 (9 Kachin, 10 northern Shan) formed Forest User Groups (FUG) for the establishment of community forests (CF). A total of 893 FUG members (603M, 290F-32.5%) formed CF management committees with 111 members (80M, 31F-27.9%). Altogether, 5,432 acres (Kachin-2,996; northern Shan-2,436) were under consideration for CF designation during the Year 2 reporting period » Two CF FUGs from northern Shan received CF certificates » Capacity building programme for BoD and CMCs were conducted focused on strengthening entrepreneurial skills and marketing. » A Community Forestry Certificate was granted in Kachin State. This CF certification will include about 400 ac of land » CF Networking Group in Northern Shan State was formed. » The dialogue between CF groups and relevant government departments was facilitated in Kachin and Northern Shan State in order to find the issues and challenges for CF certifications. » An oil outlet selling organic products produced by the project was opened in Myitkyina. » Continual mentoring for business management and administration of the producers group, BoD and CMC was provided to the 6 oil mills units. |
| 6 | <p>Project Name: Supporting landless households' livelihoods and food security through alternative income generation activities in Pyinsalu Sub-Township</p> <p>Implementation Partner: Link Emergency Aid and Development (LEAD)</p> <p>Budget: USD 407,305</p> <p>Project duration: April 2016 to December 2019</p> <p>Status: Closed during the reporting period</p> | <p>The Project provides livelihood support primarily in the rural non-farm economy by promoting income diversification. This is accomplished through supporting micro-businesses and establishing strong and sustainable village revolving funds (VRF).</p> <p>The impact of the project included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 26 village revolving fund (VRF) committees were established in 26 project villages. LEAD provided capacity building support that included bookkeeping, accounting and management skills to the VRF committee members. » Through the VRF scheme, 1,275 micro projects were provided to households to implement small scale businesses. » 3,757 beneficiaries received technical and capacity building training. » Project facilitated the formation of a CSO called "ARROW" which will take over the responsibilities of LEAD for managing VRF activities in 26 villages. |

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| 7 | <p>Project Name: Improve Co-management of Ayeyarwady wetland resources.</p> <p>Implementation Partner: Network Activities Group (NAG)</p> <p>Budget: USD 1,024,651</p> <p>Project duration: May 2017 to Jan 2020</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p> | <p>The Goal of the Project is improved co-management of wetland resources in Ayeyarwady Region. The project has four outcomes that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Increased participation of communities in fisheries co-management; » An approved legal framework for supporting community access to, and the conservation of natural resources; » Improved performance of Government institutions; and » The establishment of effective Fisheries Partnerships and Networks. <p>Over the reporting period achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » NAG is working in 185 villages from 19 townships of Ayeyarwady Region. NAG facilitated the formation of village cluster level, township level, district level and Regional level Fishery Development Associations (FDA). » In Ayeyarwady Region, a total of 1,777 Inns were identified for auction or allocation, of which 487 Inns were identified for allocation to community groups. Ayeyarwaddy Regional Fisher Network (ARFN) and NAG facilitated fishers in applying for fishing rights and 166 fishing grounds were awarded to community organizations in the 2019/2020 auction season. » Through the facilitation of NAG, the Ayeyarwaddy Freshwater Fishery Law was approved by Regional Hluttaw and also the enactment of the new Ayeyarwaddy Regional Freshwater Fishery By-Law (April 2019). » The NAG GIS team have mapped 282 Inn (fishing area) areas in Pantanaw Township with the full cooperation of the Department of Fishery. As the result of advocacy, the Regional government included in the 2019/2020 budget for mapping of Inn in Ayeyarwaddy. » NAG provided 17 fishery resource conservation areas (28 in cumulative) in the targeted 19 townships. |
| 8 | <p>Project Name: Reallocation and Development of Unused Concession Land (REAL DEV)</p> <p>Implementation Partners: NAG, LCG, CDE</p> <p>Project Duration: October 2019 - September 2022</p> <p>Project Area: Minhla Township, Magway Region</p> <p>Project Budget: USD 2,970,862</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p> | <p>REAL DEV project is currently in its inception phase. The project has 5 key objectives and outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Improved process for reclamation of land concessions based on transparent and conflict-sensitive principles. » Improved process for recognition of land rights of smallholder farmers and re-allocation of land to the landless in areas of unused concessions that is transparent, inclusive and participatory. » Improved agricultural productivity of rural farmers through more efficient climate-smart value chains and links to services. » Increased resilience of rural farmers through more secure access to land and climate change adaptation and mitigation. » Generation of insights and evidence for improved policy on recognition of land rights of smallholder farmers and re-allocation of land to the landless. » Over the reporting period the following key activities have been implemented: » Staff recruitment process for REAL DEV team finalized. A Field Office was opened in Minhla. » The consortium met with the Magway regional government and relevant departments and introduced the project. » An ad-hoc project steering committee was formed and is chaired by the Magway regional Agriculture Minister. |

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| 9 | <p>Project Name: Linking Labutta to Markets – increasing Incomes through Agriculture, Skill and Employment</p> <p>Implementation Partner: Mercy Corps partnered with Swisscontact and Ar Yone Oo</p> <p>Budget: USD 5,188,197</p> <p>Project duration: October 2015 to June 2020</p> <p>Project Area: Labutta, Ayeyarwady Delta</p> <p>Status: On-going</p> | <p>The project comprises two components. Component one, focuses on supporting the farmer producer enterprises in service delivery including input supply, extension services, equipment rental and hire purchase, access to credit and contract farming with millers. Component two, targets landless households through supporting vocational, business and life skills development and migration-related information with linkages to Yangon-based employers.</p> <p>Highlights for 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » There are 113 dedicated input supply and training managers currently embedded in 77 FPEs to coordinate technical training for government, private sector, and NGOs, and identify the required inputs, oversee input distribution and assist with monitoring whether members are using inputs appropriately. Through the formation of FPEs and the aforementioned activities (i.e. input access and distribution etc.), a total value of USDD 589,655 was created by the project. » The introduction of an equity-sharing system stimulated interest among 47 FPEs. In the first half of 2019, 24 FPEs started to produce and release their shares to raise additional capital. A total of 584 FPEs' members participated in this process with over MMK 34,480,000 (USD 22,500) raised. » Mercy Corps and Ar Yone Oo continued to provide capacity building support for those FPEs in managing their capital and investment in collaboration with the FPE Association (Su Paung Ayeyar), which also engages in supporting FPE's collective buying of inputs and negotiating and overseeing contract farming. » Mercy Corps engaged in a pilot project on crop insurance development by the Global World Insurance (GWI). This engagement focused on the crop insurance development into policy advocacy work while exploring development opportunities around the improved model of the GWI crop insurance product. » Mercy Corps and other development partners e.g. AgriPro Focus, ICCO, Myanmar Rice Federation, etc. have engaged in discussions around agriculture insurance law in Myanmar that will also cover livestock and other agricultural insurance products in addition to crop insurance. » Contract Farming continued in the summer 2018/19 season with Golden Sunland and has since then expanded with more traders/ millers engaged. A total of 2,277 acres of paddy farms were under contract farming in 2019 (both the Monsoon 2019 season and the Summer 2019/2020 seasons) with 7 rice buyers engaged, with the total value of around USD933,120 of contracted paddy. » Golden Sunland, in addition to the existing partnerships with Awba (an input company) and Village Link (an agriculture technology solution provider), a new partnership with a Fintech – Daung Capital was also established for the summer for value chain financing. » 717 landless people completed Skills Training, bringing to 1,681 (507 women) the total number who have completed their training since the beginning of the LLM project. Among these 1,681 graduates, 79% are currently employed. The number of employers that are linked to LLM increased to 126 by the end of 2019. » The annual Job Fair was successfully conducted in Pathein in the first quarter of 2019. In total, 27 private sector industries attended, while 178 LLM graduates participated in the event. More than 72 LLM graduates signed up for employment, with an additional 7 graduates from the Ministry of Border Affairs Training School in Laputta signing employment contracts with Yangon based industries. » Capacity strengthening was undertaken with two local CSO partners, Swan Saung Shin and Pin Lel Pyar, and the Government Vocational Training School in Laputta. » LLM's partnership with the two CSOs has entered a new level. Both CSOs independently carried out LLM skill training package on Construction and Mechanics, with the LLM team imparting only supervisory and facilitative support. Linkages have been established between the CSOs and Yangon based industries for future employment linkages. |

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| 10 | <p>Project Name: Agro-input and Farm Service (AIFS)</p> <p>Implementation Partner: IFDC (International Fertilizer Development Center)</p> <p>Budget: USD 6,256,565</p> <p>Project duration: December, 2015 to October, 2020</p> <p>Project Area: Central Dry Zone, Kayin and Kayha</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p> | <p>The overall objective of AIFS project is to increase smallholder farmer incomes by strengthening networks between DOA and agricultural input and service providers (ISPs) to jointly implement farmer training, demonstration plots and farmer field days. Further, by strengthening the skills and knowledge of ISPs in the use of agro-chemicals along with their business skills, this will enable ISPs to provide advice and services to clients as well as growing their businesses.</p> <p>Dry Zone Project The project has supported Myanmar's agro-input sector by strengthening networks of 55 ISPs in the Dry Zone while improving the incomes and productivity for more than 31,000 smallholder farmers through quality input use, access to technical advice and information, and reduced vulnerability to crop stress in the Dry Zone from 2016 to 2019.</p> <p>Upland Project Continuing the successes made in the Dry Zone, IFDC extend the project activities to 5 new townships in Kayah State (Loikaw township and Demoso township) and Kayin State (Hpa-An township, Kawkareik township, and Kyarinseikgyi township) in 2019. Farmer training, demonstration plots, farmer field days, and a cost-share grant model for business enhancement activities for ISPs are being implemented to support low-income smallholder farmers and ISPs. Further, by strengthening the skills and knowledge of ISPs in the use of agro-chemicals along with their business skills, this will enable ISPs to provide advice and services to clients as well as growing their businesses. The following achievements are reported.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » During the 6 months implementing period 4,164 unique farmers (1607 females or 38%) were trained in 185 training events that included modules on conservation agriculture, post-harvest, crop budgeting, nutrition, and finance. » 23 demonstrations were established, with paddy, sesame, gram, vegetables, and maize. Attained average profit improvement over 2018 of 82% (maize) and 58% (paddy). The main contributor was greater attention to best agronomic practices – fertilizer management (particularly split applications), timely pest control, soil management, good variety selection. » A total of 68 UL project ISP-initiated demonstration plots were established. The ISPs hosted 76 training sessions for 4,048 farmers (1,617 female). ISPs held 27 Field Days at the demonstration sites, for 2,245 farmers (808 females). New variety of Black Sesame was introduced in Kyarinseikgyi, In Hpa-An, one ISP is now selling irrigation equipment and plastic mulch, for horticulture crops. » Under the Working Group programme, 8 working groups have commenced their diverse projects, focused on training, production and marketing as well as in partnership with SAL, two school gardens were commenced in the last half of 2019, in Demoso and Hpa-An. |
| 11 | <p>Project Name: Support to Rice Seed Sector Development (RSSD) in the Ayeyarwady Delta</p> <p>Implementation Partner : WHH partnered with Centre for Development Innovation (CDI) - Wageningen Regional Department of Agriculture (DOA)</p> <p>Budget: USD 2,719,642</p> <p>Project duration : October 2017 to September 2020</p> <p>Project Area: Ayeyarwady Status: On-going</p> | <p>The project is supporting seed farms on early generation seed production, seed business development, strengthening seed quality assurance and strengthening seed sector coordination in the Ayeyarwady Delta.</p> <p>Highlights for 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The Early Generation Seeds (EGS) demand forecasting system, consisting of two mobile apps and one web-portal, has been developed. The system was launched in March 2019. Training has been undertaken for the Township Seed in Charge and Township Manager in the seed grower registration application, seed farm staff, DOA and Seed Division staff in the allocation and data entry of the seed demand. Currently, the system has 2329 registered users including 600 seed growers. » The seed farm investments and infrastructure development started in February 2019. 90% of the construction is completed in four government seed farms and the benefits of these investments are already visible. The seed farm assets were administratively handed over to DOA in December 2019, and the assets were registered into their books. When accomplished, the seed farm managers estimate an increase of 75-20% in EGS production. |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The project organized learning visits for 22 selected male seed growers in four targeted areas. The project supported selected seed growers in applying for seed business licenses; 9 out of 11 selected seed growers from Pathein have received business licenses. 13 participants - representatives from companies, MRF, WHH and LIFT - attended a learning visit to the Indian Seed Congress held in Hyderabad, India. 3 participants from DOA, MRF and WHH attended the APSA congress in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in November for knowledge exchange, learning and to explore business expansion and collaboration strategies in the Asian seed market. » The RSSD team monitored and evaluated the five selected seed companies' project areas to transfer second disbursements of the investment fund and allocated approximately USD 10,000 for each of three seed companies for various types of investment, including seed dryers, seed processors, seed purifier, and warehouse construction. » A second co-incentive grant to 3 companies of approximately USD 12,000 each for warehouse construction. The companies provided a match-fund of a minimum 20% which was disbursed by the end of 2019. » The contract farming pilot scheme for rice seed production was initiated in the second half of 2019 with 2 companies Kyeikk Latt and AP based on a model designed by the project. The pilot scheme involves 72 farmers and 78 PGS farmers in total under 2 companies. » In order to address the gender imbalance in the project and the seed sector the project expanded the co-investment model to 10 female seed growers. These women were selected after a training, rigorous screening process and business plan development. The grants of USD 5,000 had to be matched by a minimum 20% of their contribution and were used to construct warehouses or purchase equipment. » The Pathein Regional Seed Testing Laboratory was inaugurated in May 2019. Five Regional DOA staff have been re-assigned for lab operations. Since November 2019, the seed lab has been fully operational and is now conducting germination, moisture, red rice and purity tests. A total of 48 seed samples were tested for 2019 summer production out of a total of 12,726 seed baskets. 46 seed samples passed the seed testing representing 12,336 seed baskets. » A second PGS workshop was conducted in May 2019 and the new PGS approach with more DOA involvement was presented. This concept was also presented in the National Seed Platform meeting in Nay Pyi Taw to the Union DoA to pave way for a 'buy-in' of this system in the future. » The Project facilitated and supported the participation in the 2019 ISTA congress in Hyderabad, India that took place in June. A team of five participants, one representative of RSSD along with four DoA staff, attended the ISTA Congress for knowledge sharing and learning about seed quality testing and control. » The RSSD Team conducted 4 secretariat meetings in 2019. The Ayeyarwady Regional Seed Fair was conducted in January 2019, in Pathein. A total of 597 participants attended the fair (451 males and 146 females) from the private sector, public and development sectors. » The 3rd Ayeyarwady Seed sector Platform Meeting and Match Making session was arranged in June 2019, with the collaboration of MRF, with 99 participants attending from DoA, seed farms, seed growers, companies, MRF, rice millers, traders, banks and NGOs/ INGOs. » The second newsletter was published and distributed at the Ayeyarwady Regional seed Fair, followed by the publishing of a third newsletter during the seed platform meeting in June. » A successful sharing event on contract farming model and public-private partnership was organized and hosted by RSSD partner MRF in October 2019 in Yangon. The event was based on the results of the 2 studies commissioned by the project in cooperation with MRF. » RSSD has now 681 Facebook and 416 website followers. |

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| 12 | <p>Project Name: Restoring Unproductive Soil to Get Sustainable Yield by Green Manuring and Modified Cropping System in Dry Zone</p> <p>Implementing Partners: Golden Plain Livelihood Development Services Co-operative Ltd.</p> <p>Project Duration: May 2016 – February 2019</p> <p>Project Area: Central Dry Zone, Pakokku and Yezakyo, Magway Region</p> <p>Budget: USD 808,579</p> <p>Status: Closed during the reporting period</p> | <p>The project was implemented in 42 target villages, in Pakokku and Yezakyo townships, 21 villages in each township, Magway region. The project's objective was to encourage farmers in the dry zone to apply green manuring practices to their farming systems through the growing of sunnhemp as a green manure crop as a means of improving soil fertility in unproductive land. This required the adjusting of sowing time of cash crops (modified cropping pattern) and shorter improved varieties. The project promoted; 1) The practice of green manuring using sunnhemp as a green manure crop; 2) Changing and adjusting sowing time of cash crops; 3) The use of improved short season varieties of crops. The key Project outputs included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Key farmers trained as Agriculture Extension Worker » Demonstration Plots established; soil test results demonstrate effects of green manure (84 plots tested) » Farmers trained through a combination of Farmer Field Schools, field days and review meetings » Green manure seed plots established » Increased knowledge of DOA staff on green manuring and modified cropping pattern » Farmers are adopting the green manure and improved cropping practices; also introduce improved use of fertilizers. <p>By the closure of the project in February 2019 the following was achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 126 farmers including DoA are trained as Agriculture Extension Workers » 120 demonstration plots were conducted with key farmers and findings and knowledge disseminated to 6,284 farmers through field days » 6,262 farmers have increased skills and knowledge on green manuring practice and modified cropping pattern » 2,245 farmers have adopted the green manuring and the use of improved varieties in their cropping systems » 1,809 farmers were trained through Farmer Field Schools » 1,281 farmers underwent technical training, seed production training and capacity training that included 63 DoA staffs. |
| 13 | <p>Project Name: Soilless horticulture and other water-saving innovative technologies for landless and marginal farmers (SOW IT)</p> <p>Implementing Partners: Terre des Hommes (TdH)</p> <p>Project Duration: Feb 2014 – Feb 2019</p> <p>Project Area: Central Dry Zone</p> <p>Budget: USD 1,459,573</p> <p>Status: Closed during the reporting period</p> | <p>TdH introduced and disseminated inexpensive (USD 53 to USD 66 per unit) home-based hydroponic (soilless) horticulture systems that are efficient in water consumption, have higher yield potential and require minimal space to improve dietary diversity of women and children with the potential to increase incomes of rural households. The project main activities were 1) Establish productive small groups and individual hydroponic greenhouses, 2) Disseminate drip irrigation techniques and practices to improve soil structure and fertility, and support their adoption, 3) Establish farmers/vegetable producers associations, thus expanding market opportunities.</p> <p>The original project objective was to increase vegetable production and commercialization through the introduction of water saving cultivation systems at HH level however, during the second and third year, the objective shifted towards a more nutrition based approach. The main project outcomes became: 1) Improved diet of women and children; 2) Increased income of rural households.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Production of vegetables has been increased as well as the increase of purchasing power of the HHs. » Home gardens (HGs) have a strong positive impact on behaviour in terms of nutrition awareness, improvement and diversification of diet (96% of the HHs in the second phase improved their Food Consumption Score). » Water scarcity remains the major problem of the area and the success of an initiative related to cultivation depends upon the balance and not competitiveness with the usage of water for domestic use. During the project 32 water facilities have been renovated, benefiting 4,500 families who have increased access to water. » The innovative water-saving production techniques have been absorbed and adopted by 50% of the beneficiaries in their own traditional plots. |

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| | | <p>Achievements as of February 2019 when the Project concluded include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Home gardens were introduced to 1,762 HHs during the whole project period from 2014 to 2019. » 857 vegetable growers produce vegetables all year round and productivity gains of at least 50% were achieved. » 42 Producer Groups (PGs) were formed in the target villages of which 27 PGs initiated revolving funds and 15 PGs initiated collective purchasing of inputs. » With the aim of sharing best practice the 461 participants in the PGs underwent technical training that included demonstrations on GAP, soil management, IPM and smart post-harvest management. » Through a comprehensive campaign that included on-the-job training and the dissemination of nutritional messaging, 96% of HHs had increased Food Consumption Score (FCS). » A total of 832 households adopted improved practices, inputs and technologies. This has resulted in an increase in fresh vegetables at the HH level, a continuous year round supply along with greater dietary diversity. The production of vegetables has allowed the majority of beneficiaries to make regular savings on the purchase of vegetables up to 6,000 MMK per month, as well as occasional small-scale monetary outcomes from excess production. 600 households were able to make regular incomes by specializing in their production. » 63% of the low cost hydroponic systems are owned and managed by women that have had positive implications in supporting the nutritional needs of children in the household. |
| 14 | <p>Project Name: Delta Rural Intensification for Sustainable Economic Development-Delta RISE</p> <p>Implementation Partner: WHH partnered with GRET</p> <p>Project Area: Ayeyarwady Delta, Bogale, Mawlamyinegun and Pyapon</p> <p>Budget: USD 3,896,564</p> <p>Project duration: October 2015 to June 2019</p> <p>Status: Closed during the reporting period</p> | <p>The project focused on: Building the organisational capacity of Producer Organisations and networking with input suppliers, rice millers, and consumer associations; Seed production through participatory Guarantee Systems (PGSs) and strengthening and extending the network of PGS seed growers; Providing agriculture extension and advisory services; Delivering good nutrition practices focusing on mothers and children under two years of age; and Support for off-farm income generation activities - HG (home garden), livestock, aquaculture, etc.</p> <p>Highlights that emerged from the Project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The project has reached 3,685 HH, that are members of producer groups that included farmer producers organizations (PO, CAEDP), Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) network of seed growers and groups for financial services Inventory Credit (IC), Hire Purchase (HP) and Small Producers Credit Service (SPCS). Members of farming POs increased their income on average by approximately 31% (range 2 – 71%), Landless PO by 13% (range 2 – 30%) for rice home consumption or by 9% (2 – 16%) for animal feed making. » 21 POs (772 members) in Bogale formed a PO federation. 35 POs (2,836 members) in Bogale, Mawlamyinegun and Pyapon townships registered as individual cooperatives. » The 21 cooperatives built to support financial inclusion by providing financial services to their members (HP, IC and SPCS) will all be part of the Ayeyar Ah Man network, supported by Su Paung Ah Man local company which has been fully registered in May 2019. » Members of the paddy seed producers' association (77 persons, 101 acres production area), called Shwe Khit Ar Man (SKAM), and "my seed" producers have grown more than 297.52 t of paddy seeds since the start of the project. » SKAM received a grant of 36,000,000 MMK from RSSD project in January 2019, to implement an advance seed purchase loan for its members. » The project consortium has reached 7,501 households with extension service in paddy production, horticulture, small livestock breeding and raising and aquaculture in Bogale and Mawlamyinegun and 366 HH in Pyapone. » MAFF (Management Advice for Farm Families) was implemented in 78 villages of Bogale and Mawlamyinegun reaching 1,180 households, trained 50 MAFF facilitators from the villages and it had 252 members of which 74% were women. » Financial services (access to credit) that included Village Revolving Funds (VRF), Inventory Credit (IC), Hire Purchase (HP), Small Producer Credit Services (SPCS) supported 7,627 HH Bogale/ Mawlamyinegun and 1,259 Small Businesses in the Pyapon area. » Training of farmers and non-farmers to improve their skills and knowledge in the running of small businesses reached 1,427 HH in Bogale/Mawlamyinegun and 208 in Pyapon. |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The project through the implementation of the 4 LANN+ modules reached 3,406 HH and through the awareness campaigns indirectly 2,967 HH in Bogale/ Mawlamyinegyun (together 6,373 HH). In Pyapon the project reached 296 HH in 6 villages and indirectly through awareness campaigns 569 HH in 10 villages (total 865 HH). » A total 1,043 households started/diversified food production or food processes because of nutrition activities of the project. » Exclusive breast feeding (EBF) adoption rate increased from 17% to 45% of women with small children. » The DLN (Delta Livelihood Network) established by the project had 41 member organizations, including government offices, local NGOs, INGOs and CSOs over 3 townships. » The DLN organized 45 collective events (training, exchange visits, forums, fairs, workshops), developed and distributed 13 IEC materials including 6 DLN newsletters and launched 2 batches of small grants to implement knowledge and experience sharing activities. In addition, DLN organised 47 monthly meetings and semi-annual workshops to coordinate the activities. » From 2016 to 2019, women participation in project activities and management committee of CBOS increased from 38% to 53%. » The estimated increase in income from monsoon rice production was 65% and from summer paddy 74%. Most families had more cash in hand to cover other expenses, that included education for children, clothing and purchase of nutritious food. |
| 15 | <p>Project Name: Promotion of Farmer-managed Schemes for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development</p> <p>Implementation Partner: Metta Development Foundation</p> <p>Budget: USD 803,942</p> <p>Project Area: Ayeyarwady Delta, Labutta and Mawlamyinegyun townships</p> <p>Project duration: April 2016 to July 2019</p> <p>Status: Closed during reporting period</p> | <p>The project is provided agriculture extension and advisory services through Farmer Field Schools; supporting local seed growers in accessing registered seeds and producing certified seeds; establishment of inventory credit systems in order to improve post-harvest management and collective storage and selling practices; organising coordination and sharing meetings with communities, local authorities and government departments to update the new law and policies on rural development that are relevant with targeted communities of Labutta and Mawlamyinegyun townships.</p> <p>Highlight from the project included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 82 seed grower farmers produced 9,189 baskets of seed on 129.5 acres » 684 farmers (male 582+female 102) participated in FFS sessions in 4th Year of the project. » The project promoted GAP. In Labutta the total rice acreage grown with adopted practices was 1,965 acres and Mawgyun a total 3,293 acres. » 300 farmers out of 670 reduced the application of chemical fertilizers and weedicides by following the practices learnt from FFS session. » 202 farmers in Mawgyun benefited from IC (inventory credit) by storing 20,056 baskets of 5 rice varieties of both summer and monsoon seasons. In Labutta 91 farmers stored 4135 baskets of 3 rice varieties through IC. » Profit varied according to the season and variety. Mawgyun farmers received a profit from 850 to 1500 MMK per baskets for both summer and rainy seasons while farmers of Labutta received 1033 MMK per basket due to storage » A Research and Policy Forum was conducted in February 2019 in Pathein » 644 FFS farmers attended Land Law, Seed Law and Pesticide Law awareness meetings. |

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| 16 | <p>Project Name: Integrated Agribusiness and Rural Development (IARD)</p> <p>Implementation Partner: Radanar Ayar Rural Development Foundation</p> <p>Budget: USD 729,281</p> <p>Project Area: Ayeyarwady Delta</p> <p>Project duration: April 2016 to Feb 2019</p> <p>Status: Closed during the reporting period</p> | <p>The project provided local farmers access to agriculture extension services in order to produce quality seeds. At the same time it established contract farming with public and private sectors to sell produced seeds, providing the storage facilities, introducing collective storage and selling systems managed by farmer groups.</p> <p>Highlight from the project include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 309 seed growers participated and trained over the project period » Quality Seed Production Acres increases to 784 acres » Seed Certification was obtained for 199 baskets from DOA seed lab » 109 farmers participated in Collective Marketing » 4 contract farming are undertaken by 12 farmers » 11,889 baskets (273.38 tons) of quality seed are collectively sold » 190 farmers reported received a seed price double that of normal grain » Cross- exchange visits were conducted to Magway Regional Farmers Association and total 40 farmers participated » Total 6 seed grower farmers received technical and financial assistance from RSSD project by WHH and 17 were also invited for the basic business skill development training by RSSD Project » 2 Seed Trade Fairs were organized and successfully held and attended by regional and union level senior officials of MOALI. |
| 17 | <p>Project Name: Promoting Agricultural Diversification and Economic Integration in Northern Chin State</p> <p>Implementation Partner(s): CORAD, GRET and CRS-KMSS</p> <p>Budget: USD 2,943,141</p> <p>Project Area: Northern Chin State</p> <p>Project duration: July 2017 to June 2020</p> <p>Status: On-going</p> | <p>The Project continues to support farmers by introducing improved farming practices for remote communities in northern Chin and building resilience to climate change into farming systems. The project has continued farmer demonstrations and community engagement on slash and mulch, system rice intensification (SRI), integrated soil fertility management and improved rice seed production. These interventions provide farmers with the tools to improve productivity and move away from traditional shifting cultivation practices to sedentary farming systems and associated intensification.</p> <p>Highlights over the reporting period include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » More than 9,000 rice and vegetable farmer households were trained in seed selection, technical packages in improving farming systems and water management through village technical facilitators trained to establish demonstration plots and to disseminate extension knowledge. Through this exposure 8,062 farmers adopted a basic set of improved practices and 5,252 farmers reported increased rice and vegetable production. » The promotion of homestead production systems has been essential in securing food and nutritional security for these remote communities. The project took a two-prong approach to addressing the challenge. 'Collective' gardens were established benefitting more than 600 households and almost 4,000 households were supported on 'individual' gardens. » Surpluses generated from collective and individual vegetable production were sold into local markets or exchanged within the villages. These efforts were supported with the promotion of nutrition-sensitive information and messaging that reached more than 10,000 households in the project area. » Connecting farmers to markets is an important component of the CORAD project. To date 18 producer groups with 4,295 members have been formed around key commodities, including onions, grapes, tree beans and elephant foot yam. » Members of producer groups were trained to improve their access to market information for specific crops and acquire the necessary management, marketing and technical skills to effectively link with buyers and input providers. Through these efforts 3,221 producer group members increased their incomes through improved negotiated prices, increased sale volumes, and improved quality. |

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| 18 | <p>Project Name: Securing Positive Nutritional Outcome through Agriculture Extension, Nutritional Education and Institution Building in Rural Chin State</p> <p>Implementation Partner(s): Myanmar Institute for Integrated Development (MIID), Cornell University and Yezin Agricultural University</p> <p>Budget: USD 1,665,851</p> <p>Project Area: Northern Chin State, Hakha Township</p> <p>Project duration: December 2017 to May 2019</p> <p>Status: Closed over the reporting period</p> | <p>The project supported the implementation of nutrition-sensitive agriculture in Chin State's Hakha Township. The focus of activities was on advisory services for improved production of agricultural goods; the promotion of integrated farming including livestock and fish production, home production systems, nutrition education, and linkages between smallholder farmers and markets; women's leadership, and strengthening of local academic and government institutions involved in agriculture extension and agriculture education. The project developed manuals that will be used as teaching materials in the State Agricultural Institute and to support students and extension practitioners in their efforts to promote improved agricultural outputs in Chin.</p> <p>Over the reporting period the Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The project continued a new season of work placements for State Agricultural Institute (SAI) students that combined field visits with training on-site ensuring that the maximum number of students could participate. » Significant effort went into documenting learnings around farmer field schools. The learnings include the experiences of CORAD, also funded by LIFT in Chin State. Learnings will be published for dissemination. » In support of nutritional messaging, more than 1,000 people (60 per cent female) joined activities in 15 villages in 2019. » Advanced training was given to key participant farmers and the project shared its complete Food Production and Consumption Calendar datasets with the LEARN team to inform the production of new recipes. » A challenge confronting the intensification of home-based poultry production in Chin is availability of feed. MIID introduced vermiculture to seven villages through farmer-led training and 15 farmers began vermiculture production using the outputs as chicken feed and the vermiwash as a nutrient source for home gardens. |

Nutrition and Conflict-Affected Areas

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| 1. | <p>World Fish</p> <p>Promoting sustainable growth of aquaculture in Myanmar to improve food security and income for communities in the Ayeyarwady Delta and Central Dry Zone (MYFish-Culture-MYFC)</p> <p>(Costed extension)</p> <p>USD 4,284,592.00</p> <p>1 January - 31 December 2019</p> <p>Closed</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The MYCulture (MYFC) project was implemented in collaboration with DoF, NAG, GRET, PACT-Myanmar, HKI and Pan Taing Shin since 21 September 2015. It covered the Ayeyarwady Delta region and suitable agro-ecological areas in the Dry Zone. The project's aim is to promote the sustainable growth of aquaculture with the objectives of increased incomes of small-scale producers and improved the food and nutrition security of households. MYCulture project had two phases, learning and scale up. Key highlights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Training of Trainers (ToT) on SSA, nutrition and gender were delivered to MYCulture, DoF and IPs staff by Dhaka, Bangladesh training team. The project focused on developing staff and farmers capacity mainly on aquaculture technologies, nutrition and gender, » A total of 78 interested farmers as Aquaculture Facilitators (AFs) from Delta and DZ were selected by the project with the key objects: ta) build their capacity further on extension, SSA and nutrition, b) extend aquaculture technologies within their communities, c) support the project activities. » A total of 45 sessions of Nutrition awareness raising and cooking competition were organised for communities in the target areas. » The aquaculture facilitator and community facilitator delivered training to the project beneficiaries throughout the project period. As a result of all of these efforts, a total of 205 farmer groups were formed with a total of 3,654 farmers across 324 villages and received training. » Five aquaculture systems were tested in 2016 and scaled out from 2017 and beyond within three different water availability regimes (i.e. irrigated all year round, seasonally irrigated and rain-fed) in Delta and DZ. » A total of 1,551,987 fingerlings were nursed in 56 nurseries and accessed by a total of 1,497 ponds farmers, rest of the seeds were procured by approximately 2,000 farmers from public and private hatcheries and nurseries. Overall, a total of 2,927,083 fingerlings were stocked in 3,651 grow out ponds in 18 townships collaboration with PACT, GRET, NAG, HKI, PTS and DoF. » The project introduced Genetically Farmed Gift Tilapia (GIFT) in August 2016 for the first time in Myanmar. GIFT, a strain of tilapia, is one of the most-farmed aquaculture fish in many parts of the world, has become a fish of choice because it is fast growing and an affordable source of animal protein. » A total of 32 feed mills were established with the support from the project at community level in order to improve access to fish feed at project areas. » A total of 2,386 farmers (65% of the total beneficiaries) formed 154 savings groups and saved an amount of 51.05 million as revolving fund and accessed to credit with the support from GRET, PACT and NAG in support to aquaculture activities » From the endline survey and final evaluation the project has created more opportunities for the participation of women in community and household discussions, has improved the diet of beneficiaries due to availability of diverse food and additional income and has created an important additional source of income for the beneficiaries. |
| 2 | <p>Koe Koe Tech in partnership with Save the Children (SCI) World Vision International (WVI) Population Services International (PSI)</p> <p>Shwe Kayi Lan Bawga maymay (Shwe maymay) "Mommy who is on the golden journey"</p> <p>USD 799,738 USD</p> <p>1 June 2018 - 30 Nov 2020</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>The project aims to digitise and nationally distribute key First 1,000 Days nutrition messages to underserved populations and strengthen health systems through increased access to nutrition information for health workers and digital referral mechanisms. The key achievement during 2019 were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » KKT conducted user-testing to get feedback on the nutrition content and application of MayMay App in 2019. The testing reached out to 130 MayMay users and most of them answered that they knew about pregnancy related information and articles about children. » KKT's sub-IP, World Vision, conducted 1 ToT for 13 staff, 8 refresher training for 246 staff and 14 cascade training for 134 staff in four states/regions. Another sub-IP, Save the Children conducted 14 ToTs and cascade training across SCI field offices in eight states and regions. In 2019, a total of 263 staff and volunteers attended. In this reporting period, PSI conducted 7 refresher training for 209 field staff. » KKT's marketing staff made 100,818 referrals of MayMay App in Yangon, Dawei, Myitkyina, Taunggyi, Loikaw, Mandalay, Magway, Sagaing and Hakha. World Vision staff supported rollout of MayMay application to a total of 1062 participants, including 813 CHWs, 52 AMWs and 197 BHSs. » By the end of the year the content of the nutrition messaging was finally approved by NNC and HLPU |

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| 3 | <p>PATH</p> <p>Introduction of Fortified Rice in Myanmar</p> <p>USD 4,659,626</p> <p>July 2013 to June 2020</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>During 2019 the following key achievements were carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The Technical Guidance on Rice Fortification was launched by the Union Minister of MoHS in March 2019 and mandated the intra-ministerial order to begin using fortified rice (FR) at nursing and midwifery schools across the country. » In 2019, a total of 84 MTs of Fortified Rice Kernel was supplied to the WFP: 46 MTs of Gold Power and 38 MTs of Myanmar Agribusiness Public Corporation Golden Lace (MAPCO-GL), respectively. Therefore, a cumulative total of 5,706 MTs of FR was produced, of which 5,355 MTs were distributed: 1,876.22 MTs through the public and social sector and 3,479 MTs through the WFP in Rakhine. » PSI, in partnership with PATH, continued demand generation activities through mass media (e.g., TV spots, FM radio, print media, billboard advertising, social media, and mobile advertising on buses and taxis) and interpersonal face-to-face promotion (e.g., point-of-sales market activation, FR promotion events, and advocacy and educational events). The campaign material and tools have now been shared with rice millers for their use. » In 2019, social-sector procurement added up to 520 MTs, distributed through feeding programs under the Department of Social Welfare (DSW). BusinessKind Myanmar and PSI's Win-Win program continued to sell FR in five townships in Yangon, Mandalay, Magway, Ayeyarwady, and Southern Shan. WFP continued to distribute FR in Sittwe and reached 28,795 IDPs living in two IDP camps with 3,479 MTs of FR, distributed by the end of December. |
| 4 | <p>World Food Programme</p> <p>Project: Scaling up Fortified Rice Production and Consumption throughout Myanmar</p> <p>USD 387,380</p> <p>August 2017 to September 2020</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>WFP integrated Fortified Rice in their food distribution programme in Rakhine. During 2019, WFP achieved the following key activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » A total 164 MT of Fortified Rice was distributed to beneficiaries in IDP camps under Sittwe area, in 2019. » The FR reached to 53,525 beneficiaries (male 26,093 and female 27,432) from 8,781 households in 14 IDPs camps in Sittwe, Rakhine State. » WFP and its implementing partners conducted awareness raising sessions to beneficiaries in all the 14 camps and reached to 3,298 representatives of households. |
| 5 | <p>Save the Children International</p> <p>Leveraging Essential Nutrition Actions to Reduce Malnutrition (LEARN) Phase 2</p> <p>USD 1,574,660</p> <p>December 2016 to November 2019</p> <p>Project ended</p> | <p>LEARN provided technical support on nutrition to LIFT, LIFT's IPs and CSO, especially to IP who are working in conflict affected areas. LEARN II project ended in November 2019. Main achievements in 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » LEARN II received 203 training and technical assistance requests from LIFT IPs and Local NGOs/CSOs. The project provided training and technical support to 189 requests which covered 2,593 staff (1,176 male and 1,417 female) from LIFT, Access to Health, and SUN CSA member organizations. The technical assistance and training include Basic Nutrition training, Facilitation training, Designing for Behaviour Change training, First 1,000 Days Nutrition and Barrier Analysis training including Nutrition Integration for Children with Special Needs training. » LEARN provided Basic Nutrition and Facilitation Training to LIFT new IPs working in conflict affected areas - Kachin and Northern Shan - programme. ADRA, AVSI, FRC and their institutional IPs including Government Technical High School Teachers in Lashio, Bamaw and Myitkyina townships benefited from the technical assistance. » LEARN developed the Myanmar version Designing Behavior Change framework training curriculum and rolled out, and now many organizations are applying to design SBCC effectively. » LEARN established and developed Master Trainer Network Strategy and recruited master trainers from different organizations. 6 participants graduated as master trainers, who are capable of providing Basic Nutrition and Facilitation training in the future. » LEARN conducted Barrier Analyses for SCI in Rakhine and Pauktaw Township; and ACF in Minbya and Sittwe Townships about exclusive breastfeeding and hand washing behaviors among mothers of children under 5 years. » LEARN produced the LIFT ELQ Study on Nutrition and Resilience parts 1 and 2. |

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| 6 | <p>Save the Children International</p> <p>Bright SUN, MCCT project in Delta</p> <p>USD 3,924,500</p> <p>December 2015 to September 2019 Project ended</p> | <p>Bright SUN delivered Maternal and Child Cash Transfers (15,000 MMK/month) and SBCC to mothers during the First 1,000 Days of life, from early pregnancy through the child's second birthday. The project was completed in September 2019. Along the project, the following achievements were carried out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Bright SUN formed 412 mother groups with 412 mother leaders to facilitate Mother to Mother Support Group (MtMsG) activities. » A total of 6,128 SBCC sessions/activities (MtMsG sessions and community sessions) were conducted on IYCF, ANC and PNC, WASH and health seeking behaviors by project trained community health volunteers in collaboration with community health workers (CHWs) or Auxiliary Midwives (AMWs). These sessions were participated by 4,580 targeted mothers and 29,057 other village members, including husbands, mother in law and grandmothers attended these sessions. » 5,773 beneficiary mothers received their monthly MCCT cash through cash distribution focal persons. A total of 129,196 cash transfers were made along the project and of these 27,906 payments were transferred by Mobile Money Cash Transfer. » Endline survey was conducted by the end of the project and the report will be available in 2020. |
| 7 | <p>Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in partnership with Karuna Mission Social Solidarity (KMSS) Hakha</p> <p>Productive Agriculture Through Community Engagement (PACE)</p> <p>USD 1,813,203</p> <p>June 2016 to June 2020</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>PACE project was designed to support small-holder farmers in 60 villages in 3 townships of central Chin State. PACE delivers training and capacity building on improved agricultural practices and improved nutrition practices through community-based approach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The project trained on improved agronomic practices for maize and beans 2,631 beneficiaries (1,271 female and 1,360 male). » The project conducted Demonstration Home Gardening (DHG) sessions with 226 beneficiaries of these 214 were women beneficiaries. » Nutrition messages were delivered through Karuna Mother's Group (KMG) meetings and home visits or group meetings. A total of 1,682 PLWs joined these sessions. » 25 Karuna Mothers Groups (KMG) were formed in 60 villages across three townships. |
| 8 | <p>PATH in partnership with BusinessKind Myanmar (BKM) Terres Des Hommes Italy (TDH-Italy), and Base of the Pyramid Innovation Center (BoPInc)</p> <p>SMART MOVE: Enhancing migration transitions through urban food system innovations and peer directed services for migrant workers in Yangon</p> <p>USD 1,999,861</p> <p>October 2019 to September 2022</p> <p>Ongoing (Inception Phase)</p> | <p>The project aims to enhance migration transitions for vulnerable migrant populations, including factory workers, street food vendors, and migrant households, through the introduction of peer-directed networks as well as services and innovative urban supply chains for nutritious products, including fortified rice (FR). The inception phase the following activities were carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Setting up the project including agreement contract with sub-IPs, project kick-off meeting and coordination meeting with relevant stakeholders. » An introduction meeting between PATH, BoPInc, and selected rice millers that have the most potential to engage in the project and support FR distribution. As a result, four millers (MAPCO Golden Lace Co., Ltd., Excel, Red Star, and Swan Htet Myat) committed to participate in the project to provide supply chain support to distribute Fortified Rice. |
| 9 | <p>World Food Programme (WFP)</p> <p>Engaging Businesses to deliver Government national nutrition strategies through SBN (SUN Business network) in Myanmar</p> <p>USD 297,813</p> <p>November 2019 to October 2021</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>The project aims to improve and strengthen the private sector's contribution towards improving access to healthy and safe food in Myanmar. Through SUN Business Network the private companies will actively participate and engage in the improvement of nutrition in Myanmar. The project started in November 2019 as a one month inception period for setting up the project. During the inception period the following activities were carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The project has drafted a ToR for the Advisory Committee of the SBN and candidate members have been selected and invited for joining the Committee. » A discussion on membership criteria and a monitoring system for keeping the SBN members accountable to the criteria took place, and these will be finalized in the first Committee meeting in 2020. » The project started to draft the SBN Strategy which focuses on four main areas: food fortification, food safety, consumers awareness and nutrition in the working place. |

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| 10 | <p>Karuna Mission Social Solidarity (KMSS)</p> <p>Supporting Conflict Affected Women and Infants for Nutrition (SAFE WIN)</p> <p>Budget: USD 1,996,290</p> <p>July 2019 to June 2022</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>KMSS is implementing the project in conflict-affected areas in Kachin and northern Shan State. The project is overall managed by KMSS National Office and the field level implementation is oversought by three diocesis; KMSS Myitkyina, Bhamo and Lashio. The project covers 51 communities including 4 IDPs in 10 townships. The project started in July 2019 with 6 months of inception periods for setting up the project. During the inception period the following activities were carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Staff recruitment and project kickoff meetings were organised with relevant project stakeholders. » Project Steering Committee was formed to provide strategic direction for effective and efficient management on SAFE WIN project. The Steering Committee consists of the Directors of KMSS-Myitkyina, KMSS-Bamaw, KMSS-Lashio and KMSS National Office and project grant manager as a secretariat. » Introduction and coordination meetings with Government departments took place in Bhamo, Myitkyina and Lashio. » Development of project MEAL plan and preparation for baseline survey have been started in the inception phase. |
| 11 | <p>Save the Children in partnership with: Shan State Youth Capacity Building Centre (SSYCBC) Wunpawng Ninghtoi (WPN)</p> <p>Building Resilience In Conflict affected areas of Kachin and Shan States (BRICKS)</p> <p>USD 3,500,000</p> <p>August 2019 to July 2022</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>BRICKS aims to increase resilience to shocks and conflict, and to protect adolescents from trafficking and unsafe migration. BRICKS focuses on youth and adolescent boys and girls, pregnant and lactating women and children 0-23 months of age, living in IDPs camps, host communities and conflict affected villages in northern Shan State. The project started in August 2019 with 5 months of inception periods. The following activities were carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The project made a sub-IP agreement contract with local CSOs. » Staff recruitment for SC as well as local partners was completed. » Series of training on nutrition, livelihood and child production for project staff including local CSO staff were organised during inception periods. The training includes Nutrition Induction training, Financial Education Training for Adults, Financial Education Training for Youths and Child Protection and Child Right Training. » Coordination meetings with local authorities and relevant government departments were conducted at all township levels. |
| 12 | <p>Department of Social Welfare in partnership with: Department of Public Health and General Administration Department</p> <p>Maternal and Child Cash Transfer Programme in Chin (Cash Transfer Grant for MCCT Chin)</p> <p>USD 6,993,917</p> <p>9 March 2017 - 31 December 2019</p> <p>Closed</p> | <p>Department of Social Welfare (DSW), Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has been delivering social protection, social assistance and services in Myanmar for 60 years. At the end of 2014, the National Social Protection Strategic Plan (NSPSP) was endorsed by the Government of Myanmar including the Maternal and Child Cash Transfer (MCCT) programme as one of the flagship programmes to start being implemented by the government, initially in Chin State from June 2017 to September 2019 with LIFT funding. this grant has come to an end with the last payment with LIFT Funding delivered in September 2019. From October, DSW is continuing the MCCT programme with Government budget.</p> <p>During the LIFT-funded period, the project achieved the following results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 14 payments were made for MCCT Chin from June 2017 to Sept 2019 and reached 33,918 MCCT beneficiaries. » Four PDMs (Post Distribution Monitoring) were conducted and all findings were widely shared to the Chin State Government, development partners and stakeholders through meetings and workshops. |
| 13 | <p>Department of Social Welfare in partnership with Department of Public Health and General Administration Department</p> <p>Implementing of a grant in Myanmar provided by Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (Operation Grant for MCCT Chin)</p> <p>USD 1,500,000</p> <p>9 March 2017 - 30 June 2020</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>The operational grant to DSW for the support of the CHIN MCCT programme is meant to be utilised to conduct complementary activities for nutrition SBC and to cover some of the operational costs to carry out the MCCT delivery to the target beneficiaries in Chin State.</p> <p>During 2019 the following activities were carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » SBCC review meeting for Chin was conducted and analysed Chin SBCC activities in July 2019. » DSW jointly organised the action planning workshop for Kayin and Kayah with DoPH, NNC and State Health Staff in July 2019. » The SBCC refresher training of SBCC Cascade were implemented from April, 2019 to June, 2019 and trained 725 BHS & 565 VHWS from 9 townships. » The community awareness sessions such as mother support group sessions/ nutrition awareness sessions were conducted in 1,468 villages and wards and have reached to 22,463 beneficiaries in total. |

| Sr. | IP, project title, timeframe, budget, status | Important updates |
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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » There were 8 state coordination meetings organised since June 2017 to the end of 2019. The State Social Affairs Minister, Parliamentarians, GAD, State Health Department & other officials and Dy. DG & key staff from DSW attended these meetings. This demonstrates the strong commitment and support for the MCCT program from key Chin stakeholders, especially from the State Minister of Social Affairs, GAD and State Health Department. » A policy level study visit to Nepal was conducted from 8 September, 2019 to 13 September, 2019. 8 delegates from Union and State DSW, State Government, Planning & Budgeting Department, and Auditor General Office participated in this visit. Among 8 delegates, 6 delegates including Chin Social Affairs Minister were supported by Chin MCCT operation grant. |
| 14 | <p>Department of Social Welfare in partnership with Department of Public Health and General Administration Department</p> <p>Support to DSW MCCT Program in Kayah State" (Operation Grant for MCCT Kayah)</p> <p>USD 447,586</p> <p>February 2019 - June 2020</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>DSW started to implement the MCCT programme in Kayah and Kayin States in late 2018, with Gov Budget for the cash transfers. DSW requested support from LIFT for the operational grants for the first years of programme implementation in order to cover some of the operational costs, conduct M&E of the programme and nutrition SBCC activities in partnership with the State DOPH. During 2019 the following activities were carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » At State Level SBCC Workshop was organised by the State Health Department with UNICEF funding. 36 participants from (State and Township Health Staff, DSW, UNICEF, IRC, World Vision, KMSS, ACF, CPI, MRCS, MCWA and the ethnic Health Organization - CHDN). » Eight micro plans for field SBCC activities in Kayah SBCC Action Plans were developed for 7 townships and for non-government controlled areas to be carried out by one EHO (Ethnic Health Organization)-CHDN. » In accordance with developed State Level SBCC action plans, total 37 Personnel (18 BHS, 9 DSW staff, 2 MCWA and 2 CHDN staff from 7 Township Health Department) attended the SBCC ToT training organised by the State Nutrition Team Leader and Assistant Director (NNC_ National Nutrition Center). » After ToT training at State level, each Township Medical Officer and Township Health Training team conducted 11 training sessions that cascaded the ICYF knowledge to 374 BHS from the respective Township Health Department. » The first PDM training was provided to 12 DSW staff and enabled to collect PDM data digitally using the KOBO tools. |
| 15 | <p>Department of Social Welfare in partnership with Department of Public Health and General Administration Department</p> <p>Support to DSW MCCT Program in Kayin State" (Operation Grant for MCCT Kayin)</p> <p>USD 1,290,264</p> <p>February 2019 - June 2020</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>DSW started to implement the MCCT programme in Kayah and Kayin States in late 2018, with Gov Budget for the cash transfers. DSW requested support from LIFT for the operational grants for the first years of programme implementation in order to cover some of the operational costs, conduct M&E of the programme and nutrition SBCC activities in partnership with the State DOPH. During 2019 the following activities were carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » SBCC ToT training was organised and a total 42 staff members attended the SBCC ToT training conducted by HLPU, NNC, and Public Health Nurse at State Level. » After the SBCC ToT training at State Level, Township Medical Officers and Township Health Training team conducted the cascade training at their townships attended by 1,915 participants (BHS and VHWS) in all 7 townships. » The first PDM training was conducted and a total 40 DSW staff attended and enabled to collect the PDM data digitally using the Koko tool in December 2019. » From August to September 2019, a baseline study was conducted which included a population-based survey and a cohort study of mothers and children under the age of five. The population-based survey was designed to assess key household characteristics and maternal and child health and nutrition indicators at the beginning of the MCCT program in Kayin and Kayah State. The baseline survey report results were shared and validated three times with stakeholders including the M&E committee, especially with MoHS and the reports will be produced early 2020. The tracked baseline values against the M&E framework indicators will support DSW together with LIFT to set targets in the next steps. |

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| 16 | <p>Save the Children International in partnership with International Rescue Committee and Danish Red Cross (Myanmar Red Cross Society)</p> <p>Technical Assistance to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement's Chin Maternal and Child Cash Transfer Program (TEAM MCCT)</p> <p>USD 3,852,283</p> <p>11 July 2017 to 31 January 2020</p> <p>Closed</p> | <p>In the Technical Assistance to Chin Maternal and Child Cash Transfer Project (TEAM MCCT), Save the Children is working in partnership with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Danish Red Cross (DRC) to provide technical assistance to the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) to develop and implement two components: the SBCC activities and the monitoring and learning support strategy to DSW when implementing the MCCT in Chin State.</p> <p>The SBCC component supports the delivery of nutrition, health, and hygiene activities by Basic Health Staff (BHS), auxiliary midwives (AMW) and community health workers (CHW) to members of the community benefitting from cash transfers, and key community influencers and leaders. The project supported AMWs and CHWs to form and maintain Mother to Mother Support Groups (MtMSGs) in communities as well as reinforce the forthcoming rollout of the government's Community-Infant and Young Child Feeding (C-IYCF) curriculum for BHS, with additional SBCC materials for all Volunteer Health Workers (VHW).</p> <p>The Monitoring and Learning component established a joint monitoring mechanism with DSW to complement and support DSW Case Managers (CM) responsibilities for monitoring the DSW's MCCT project by providing or supporting verification, learning/adaptation, and capacity development.</p> <p>During 2019 the following activities were carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » SBCC Strategy/Action Plan follow up was finalized in May 2019 and submitted to the two key line ministries MOHS and MSWRR » The Revision of SBCC Strategy/Action Plan was finalized in July 2019 and submitted to the two key line ministries MOHS and MSWRR at Central Level » In August 2019, the TEAM staff facilitated the National Nutrition Month Activities at Central, State, township and community level together with key line ministries staff. » After the SBCC Strategy Review Workshop in July-2019, the Chin State SBCC Action Plans and strategy is a good model to learn from and replicate for other states and regions as an integration of MCCT-SBCC Component especially in Kayin and Kayin State MCCT plan. » TEAM MCCT participated in the MS-NPAN sub-national planning workshop as a key representation organisation for Chin State in Nov 2019. » TEAM MCCT co-facilitated the Chin MS-NPAN Workshop in Dec 2019. The first draft MS-NPAN actions plan for Chin State was documented and NNC will continue to finalize this plan. » BHS received MtMSG (Mother to Mother Supporting Groups) Mobilisation trainings – 310 out of 439 BHS in Northern Five Townships received this training in early 2019. » Progress made in cascading the MtMSG mobilisation training to 77% of volunteer health workers (289 out of 374 volunteers) in Northern Five Chin Townships during Jan-Jun 2019. » Nutrition awareness sessions completed with 83% of MtMSG facilitators leading monthly (at once session within six months) sessions for a total of 3,481 monthly sessions across all 9 townships during Jan-Jun 2019 » 98% (687 out of 702) of BHS in Chin State have received 6-days cIYCF trainings and 68% (696 out of 1027) during the reporting period by co-facilitating with government staff in each township. At the time of township cascade training, the government staff welcomed for co-facilitation of IP staff during Jan-Jun 2019. » Developed and distributed the MtMSG materials and PDM report booklets for both State Health key staff and DSW key staff in Chin State in Dec 2019. » Conducted 489 sessions of cooking competition activity in every township with the support of TEAM MCCT staff together with midwives. The manuals and recipes are technically supported by TEAM MCCT » Conducted 5,055 community mobilisation sessions. This count is cumulative of all the different types of including MtMSG sessions, knowledge sharing sessions to VSPC members, nutrition campaigns, village fairs and cooking competition sessions. » TEAM MCCT continued to support DSW in implementing monitoring activities (PDM) and in supporting staff capacity building. In Feb 2019, Lesson Learnt Workshop was conducted with DSW Case Managers from the 9 Chin Townships on PDM and Key Informant Interview tools. TEAM MCCT also contributed its monitoring data, in particular, PDM data, to DSW to expand their monitoring databases » Conducted Second, Third and Final Monitoring round and developed the First and Second Monitoring reports. » Conducted Debriefing and Lessons Learnt Workshop with 31 DSW Case Managers in Hakha in February 2019. » Supported DSW with the PDM with Kobo data collection, KII trainings, and technical support to case managers in the field using tablets and application |

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| 17 | <p>SPECTRUM - Sustainable Development Knowledge Network (SDKN)</p> <p>USD 290,327</p> <p>September 2018 – December 2020</p> | <p>The Spectrum project is a research project and aims to understand and to fill the information gap about the edible insect sector in Myanmar and conduct research for the development of the animal feed sector using insects and their organic waste.</p> <p>During 2019, the project conducted the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Study on insects species use, wild capture and farming across 10 States and Regions was completed. » Value Chains Analysis and Market assessment for cricket completed. » Feed sector work has progressed to the trial phase via three small grants in support of projects at Yangon Universities. Two of three draft Research Reports are available. » One video was produced on the success story of cricket farming expansion of one farmer in Hapann was produced. » Food safety study under the insect sector was completed. » Small scale trials at Black Soldier Fly raising which were successful. Linkages with Bokashi Composting group also experimenting with BSF. » The Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and irrigation already visited the LIFT supported cricket farm at the Livestock Zone, Hpa-An. The cricket farmer was encouraged by the minister to extend. The Livestock Department was also instructed to get FDA approval for the farmed crickets. |
| 18 | <p>CDN project in partnership with CORDAID, World Concern, SNV, KMSS, BMB, PKBA, KKBA</p> <p>In Thantaunggyi, Bawgali, Leitho and Htantabin townships</p> <p>USD 4,840,000</p> <p>July 2016 - June 2020 :</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>The project targeted over 5,000 smallholder farmer households (HHs) with commercial potential in Thandaunggyi Township. This area emerged from conflict and consists of a mixture of internally displaced persons (IDPs), IDP returnees and host HHs. The project aimed to help the rural poor in both areas to “step-up” and improve their position in the value chain (VC), to get market access and sustainable access to credit and other inputs. Besides improving their income and getting them out of the circle of debt, the project focused on nutrition and WASH and used the “hang-in” strategy, as a lack of availability and access to adequate drinking water and nutritious food was identified.</p> <p>During 2019, the following achievements were reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » By the end of December 2019, 5,803 households (84% of all 6,920 households in target villages) participated in and/or benefitted from at least one project activity since the start of the project. The project activities include the nutrition, WASH, motor-bike road development, agriculture and Value Chains activities, VSLA formation, resilience activities. » 2,319 households were reached with nutrition-sensitive information (through quarterly community sessions, mother groups and training home garden focal points) » 2,351 households were reached with WASH sensitive information (through quarterly community sessions, mother groups and PHAST training). » In this reporting period, 489 households benefitted from the home-garden activities. The seed market study report was finalized in February. » Twelve gravity flow water systems (GFWS), 7 slow sand filters (SSF), 9 spring catchment protections (SCP) were completed throughout the project implementation period. » Project continued to train 692 focal persons for farming activities of specific crops and approximately 4,357 farmers (from 3,631 households). » By the end of 2019, 52 loan and saving groups are active in 42 villages. » Turmeric Value Chains assessment was completed in 2019. » Market linkages services for Cardamom was facilitated and project tried to link the Myanmar ChinPaungPhaLar association with Nippon foundation for market linkages improvement |

| Sr. | IP, project title, timeframe, budget, status | Important updates |
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| 19 | <p>TBC</p> <p>Stand UP Phase I</p> <p>2,966,939 USD</p> <p>May 2017 - Sept 2019</p> <p>Closed</p> | <p>The Sustainable Transformation for Agriculture, Nutrition and Development in Uplands (STAND UP) project was managed by The Border Consortium (TBC) in collaboration with eight civil society organisations and ethnic service providers. The project addressed the most urgent needs of IDPs and local communities on WASH, nutrition, land rights and agriculture; in 40 village tracts across 10 townships in the south East. The project came to an end in September 2019. A second phase started soon after.</p> <p>The following achievements were reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Over 71,000 individuals spread across 641 villages have directly benefited the development initiatives coordinated through these ethnic service providers (ESPs) and civil society organisations (CSOs). » Land tenure security has been strengthened for over 19,000 people throughout this project, primarily through land use certificates issued by the KNU and supplemented by recognition from the Government's farmland registration process. » over 3,300 farmers have either reclaimed their abandoned agricultural fields, improved farming skills or accumulated productive assets after years of conflict-induced displacement. » Public awareness campaigns reached over 18,000 individuals to promote behavioural changes to improve infant and young child feeding practices. » over 6,100 households have benefitted from improved access to domestic water supply and more than 4,900 households have improved access to sanitary latrines. » The capacities of local civil society agencies are driving these initiatives in contested areas and demonstrating that they are sensitive to protection and gender dynamics at the same time. |
| 20 | <p>TBC</p> <p>STAND UP Phase II partnership with 17 ESPs and CSOs in Mon, Kayar, Kayin, Taninthari States</p> <p>USD 4,096,894</p> <p>October 2019 to September 2022</p> <p>Ongoing (Inception Phase)</p> | <p>TBC STAND UP Phase II is a continuation of STAND UP phase I with additional 8 CSOs (total 17 CSOs).</p> <p>During the inception period the following activities were carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Identification of target area: 51 village tracts spread across 14 townships with an estimated total population of 158,000 will be benefited from this project. At least 60,000 people are anticipated to directly benefit during the project's three year duration. Agriculture, land tenure, nutrition, WASH and social protection activities will be implemented. » 2 days workshop for 17 sub-IPs was organised and resulted in the finalization of the contractual agreement with each partner. » Baselines survey ToR and questionnaire were developed. » MEAL plan and project ToC was revised and drafted. |

Rakhine

| Sr. | IPs, Project title, Time frame, budget | Important Updates |
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| 1 | <p>Save the Children</p> <p>Sub-partner : Community Empowerment and Resilience Association (CERA)</p> <p>Tat Lan Plus in Sittwe, Pauktaw and Mrauk-U Townships (Rakhine State)</p> <p>January 2019 - June 2021</p> <p>USD 5,558,945</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » SBCC: During the reporting period, 66 Mother leaders groups consisting of 531 Mother leaders and 4357 members in 28 Rakhine villages, 1 Muslim village and 7 IDP camps (a total of 4888 PLW) has been formed. » 1863 SBCC sessions with 597 Mother to mother support groups were conducted. » 186 SBCC sessions were given to the Father to Father support Group and 7733 participants (including fathers and key influencers) attended. » 182 culinary sessions for mothers with practical sessions about the preparation of nutritious food and meals for under 2 children by using local foods were conducted and 3294 participants attended. » Screening and referral of SAM and MAM cases to IMAM structures: During April to December 2019, SC conducted monthly MUAC screening to 6-59 month old children in Pauktaw and Sittwe camps reaching an average 8,991 children (Boy – 5165, Girl – 4969) per month. » Out-Patient Therapeutic Programme- OTP: SC conducts this activity at Pauktaw camps and 766 children (Boys-346 and Girls-420) benefitted through passive screening. Identified SAM children with medical complications are referred to MSF at Pauktaw camps. » A total of 302 children (Boys- 136 and Girls - 166) benefitted through the OTP program. 257 new SAM children (Boys - 117 and Girls - 140) were admitted into SC's OTP program in Pauktaw camps. » The programme distributed 517 soaps and 257 baskets to promote hygiene practice. Total 18 SAM children (7 from MSF and 11 from MHAA) were referred to SC OTPs. » During this reporting period, breastfeeding Counsellors conducted interpersonal counselling with 2739 new PLWs (1563 LW and 1176 PW) » As a collaboration with the township health department and Rural Health Center(RHC), Sub-RHC, SC also supported 11 government health and nutrition campaigns. » SC distributed 88 maternal Hygiene Kits to pregnant women at Rakhine villages and 4401 child hygiene kits to lactating women both IDP camps (Pauk Taw and Sittwe) and Villages. » Financial Education Training: 749 adults (F-530, M-219) in 18 villages and 4 IDPs camps and 251 youth (F-137 , M-114) in 3 villages and 5 IDPs camps completed financial education training. » Business Skill Development training: 745 adults (F-551, M-194) in 18 villages and 2 IDPs camps and 164 youth (F-89 , M-75) in 4 IDPs camps completed business skill development training. » Productive Grant: 441 beneficiary households (F-321, M-120) who already attended Financial Education and Business Skill Development training were received. 70% of productive grant beneficiaries are female. » 22 public work activities from 18 villages for 21 village road renovation, 1 small bridge construction and 1 pond renovation with fencing. In 2019, on average each beneficiary worked 21.9 days, resulting in average income per beneficiary of 131.760MMK. Total of 11,661 days of work have been paid so far for 531 (M-180, F-351) beneficiaries. » Formative Research on Barriers for Transferable Life Skill is finished in November 2019. Three major research projects that Programmatic analysis of social cohesion in Rakhine State, Cross-border study on language barriers in Rakhine State and Cox's Bazar and Freedom of Movement Preliminary Analysis were completed in 2019. |

| Sr. | IPs, Project title, Time frame, budget | Important Updates |
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| 2. | <p>Relief International</p> <p>Response Mechanism for Addressing Protracted Displacement in Rakhine State, Myebon and Mrauk U</p> <p>January 2019 - December 2021</p> <p>USD 3,435,639</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Strengthened Livelihoods and Social Cohesion: Total of 147 participants (72 women and 75 men), 70 Muslims, 65 Rakhine and 12 Chin who are between 18 and 56 years old) trained in vocational skills through entrepreneurship training and short-term vocational training » RI recruited and deployed 8 entrepreneurship mentors in Myebon (3 Muslim, 2 Rakhine and 1 Chin) and Mrauk U (1 Muslim and 1 Rakhine) who completed BEO, GYB and SYB training, willingness to support as mentors and prior experience in business. » 20 days boat engine repair training that was conducted for 10 youths from Taung Paw camp was aligned with the needs of the trainees and fishermen in the camp. » Motorcycle repairing training for 15 youths from Myebon town is completed. » Protection monitoring and mechanisms: RI has conducted protection mainstreaming awareness session training for CSOs in Mrauk U, Myebon and Taung Paw IDP camp as well to improve the availability of public service activities in Myebon town and total 71 men and 94 women joined the sessions in 2019. » RI produced two protection reports, with analysis and conclusions informed by the community-based monitoring system. » In July 2019, RI established a new comprehensive protection monitoring system, assessing the overall context and camp closure process in Taung Paw across ten areas: freedom of movement; access to livelihoods; access to education; access to health; access to justice; citizenship; migration; relocation and housing, land and property (HLP); vital events; and safety and security. » 1 UN/INGO advisory group meeting held with 11 participants from UN agencies and INGOs in Sittwe. |
| 3 | <p>International Rescue Committee (IRC)</p> <p>Tat Lan Phase II</p> <p>USD 10,500,000 Increased to USD 13,500,000.</p> <p>Myebone and Minbya Townships</p> <p>Jan 2016 – Dec 2020 Project activities are put on hold due to Travel authorizations issue</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » No activities implemented in 2019 due to Rakhine Government administrative suspension, only remote monitoring by phone conducted with community groups supported in previous years. » Key agriculture techniques are still being used in 82 villages (80%). Key techniques are seed bed preparation, split fertiliser application, the use of the mechanical power tiller, use of mechanical rice thresher. » WASH activities organised by Community Hygiene Promoters continued in 62 villages (61%). » 111 of 167 VSLAs continue to function. » Of the 52 VDCs supported in 2017-2018, all remained active either continuing activities that were directly related to the TL-II programme, e.g. coordinating a previous Tat Lan activities (23 villages) or organising regular VDC meeting (27 villages) and implementing part of the village development plan (41 villages) or supported activities that were building on previous Tat Lan activities, e.g. drafting (4 villages) or submitting (5 villages) proposals for funding of part of the village development plan that was developed with support of TL-II. The TL-II VDCs were also recognised by other organisation as a useful instrument to support the implementation of activities. The VDC in 16 villages supported and/or coordinated the implementation of other INGOs or UN agencies while 11 VDC supported Government initiatives in their village. |

| Sr. | IPs, Project title, Time frame, budget | Important Updates |
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| 4 | <p>Danish Refugee Council (DRC) Sub-partner: Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)</p> <p>Vocational Training and Livelihood Opportunity for Youth in and out of Camp in Rakhine State-Phase II</p> <p>Sittwe, Maungdaw</p> <p>USD 3,500,000</p> <p>Jan 2019 – Dec 2020</p> <p>On-going</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Demand driven, Beneficiary empowered Skills Matching events done for Rakhine and with mobile-based approaches for Muslim youths. » Organized Two job Fairs and Career MarketPlace events in Sittwe and IDP camps to promote linkages between job seekers and skilled youth with private, local and international enterprises » Enterprise Assessment to see potential opportunities for the youth in the existing market. A total of 17 businesses were targeted and agreement letters were signed with 15. » NRC started an official collaboration with the Governmental Technical High School (GTHS) to use their standard curriculum for tailoring and motorbike repair. As a result of this collaboration, GTHS authorized the use of its logo on course-end certificates issued by NRC as an official recognition. » Training Centre Renovations done for upgrading the existing youth centres in Maw Thee Nyar and Say Tha Ma Gyi IDP camps. Upgrades included more storage capacity for equipment, wall partitions installation, replacement fencing, and hand washing facilities. <p>Vocational training: Youth Beneficiary Training in 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 1097 youth (M 448, F 649), completed life skills training. » 419 youth (M 269, F 150), completed soft skills training. » 977 (M 479, F 498) youth trained short term vocational training. » 304 (M 143, F 161) completed long term vocational courses. » 1328 (M 645, F 683) youth received small business skills, coaching and mentoring support. » 174 (M 93, F 81) youth hosted by enterprises as part of an apprenticeship program. » 595 (M 335, F 260) youth received business start-up kits. » 93 (M 45, F 48) youth received business start-up cash grants » 9 (M 8, F 1) graduates from long-term courses employed in motorbike repair and dressmaking shops, while 8 female youth are generating income as a dress making business start-up. |
| 5 | <p>International Labour Organization (ILO)</p> <p>Skills for Improvement of Livelihoods, Economic Opportunities and Security (TVET)</p> <p>USD 1,494, 983 Increased up to USD 2,992,266</p> <p>Sittwe, Kyaukphyu, Thandwe, Gwa, Buthidaung, Maungdaw</p> <p>Jul 2017 – Jun 2020</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Validation workshops done for Labour Market Assessment and the Gender Analysis. » Held Rakhine TVET Coordination Group meeting three times » Established a local training and employment council (LTEC) which has been finally named as Rakhine State Skills Development Technical Group (SDTWG) » Facilitated the accreditation of the Royal Sittwe Hotel by the NSSA to serve as the Skills Assessment Center for Hotel and Tourism. » Supported district LEO offices to coordinate job fairs in cooperation with UMFCCI and TVET coordination group members. » Facilitated income generation of the welding graduates through the Internal Communal Shared Service Facility where they produced welding works and products like metal cabinets, tables, benches, steel gates and rickshaw (toktok) body building repairs. |
| 6 | <p>UNOPS</p> <p>Rakhine Communication Hub</p> <p>USD 400,000</p> <p>Rakhine</p> <p>June 2019-May 2021</p> <p>On-going</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 2 media literacy training conducted with 49 participants (F:21) » 2 photography workshops conducted with 21 participants (F:5) » 3 video workshops conducted with 24 participants (F:8) » 29 project videos produced » Supported » 1 workshop organized with MIMU and local organizations, local media on 4W tools » 2 media meetings organized during donors' visits » Supported local NGO PDI/Kintha in setting-up the Akyab Institute weekly talk |

Financial Inclusion

| Sr. | IPs, Project title, Time frame, budget | Important Updates |
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| 1 | <p>Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA)</p> <p>Myanmar: Financial Inclusion Expansion through Co-operatives (MyFINANCE)</p> <p>31/10/ 2016 to 30/06/2019</p> <p>USD 3,000,000</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MyFINANCE is assisting two township level co-operatives in the dry zone to transition their financial lines of business to have sustainability. » CCA finalised the project targeted townships- Myingyan and Nathogyi and those townships have 30,132 members and 16,494 members respectively. » CCA received INGO registration from Ministry of Home Affairs. » MOUs have been signed with the Department of Cooperatives and the Townships. In addition, both TSCs were inaugurated. » CCA conducted a market survey in Myingyan and Natogyi townships and designed several loans and savings products to be launched shortly through the TSCs. » Savings products had been rolled out in May 2018 and savings were mobilized from the members since it was launched. More villages were reached out for membership campaign by conducting financial education on savings and loans. The collection of savings and processing of loans are mostly done in the village as this is observed to be more convenient and cost-savings to the member-borrower. CCA is developing financial product designs as per market survey. To boost members' saving, project designed the marketing strategy including raffle draw for members. » Project rolled-out the loan products in August and the two TSCs were able to release a total of MMK 629 million to 6,299 members (71% are women). 96.5% of loan utilization are in agriculture and 3.5% of loan are utilized in retail business. » Two Townships Saving and Credit Federations disbursed MMK 8.9 billion to 43,889 households. 87 percent of the loans were for agricultural production; 12.6 percent for business/trade and 0.4 percent for livestock. » Project applied for a loan through Guarantee Fund to two local banks : Yoma Bank and A Bank. However, Yoma Bank declined to be the partner bank for the Guarantee Fund as they wanted to focus on their hire-purchase program. There was a delay to get loan fund from A Bank as they had some concerns that needs to be validated and clarified on TSCs. |
| 2 | <p>Cordaid Foundation</p> <p>Technical assistance to LIFT/ Cordaid partner microfinance institutions</p> <p>15/3/ 2016 to 30/06/2019</p> <p>USD 1,000,000</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » In conjunction with the hedged investments Cordaid implements the program of Technical Assistance to LIFT/Cordaid partner MFIs. » The partner MFIs are PGMF, Proximity Designs, Vision Fund Myanmar and CARD Myanmar. CordAid has also exploring technical assistance support other local MFIs such ECLOF, Unique Quality, and Pyae Mahar and another international MFI, Entrepreneur Dumonde. » 87% of total budget was allocated for technical support to MFIs, out of them 54% was utilised. » CordAid achieved its targets of loan agreement with value of USD 10.4 million to PGMF, CARD Myanmar, Vision Fund and Proximity Designs. Cordaid is providing hedged loans to four local partners in nine different tranches and the amount of loan outstanding is USD 6.3 million (80.7%). |
| 3 | <p>GRET</p> <p>Creation of a microfinance institution in the Dry Zone, Myanmar</p> <p>1/12/2013 to 30/06/2019</p> <p>USD 3,463,600</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » GRET's Dry Zone project is operating under Thitsar Oo Yin Company Limited after successfully transformed from NGO based MFI to Company based MFI. » Thitsar Ooyin Management Committee, composed of Chin General Manager – as Chairman of the Committee – and Dry Zone General Manager and the Dry Zone Project Manager – as Technical Assistant – sits on this Committee. » The Committee met in 2019 in April, July, and September whereas all participated to the strategic kick-off meeting with Kredits (Management Information System). » Due to funding shortage, dry zone team has 5.7% slightly decreased in outreach. » Dry Zone branch network which remained composed of 3 branches since 2016 extended one new branch office in Ye U township in December 2018 that was enabled by the access to new debt funding from FMO (December 2018). » FMO borrowing is started in this quarter and Thitsar Ooyin received 1st disbursement loan amount 500,000 USD on 10 December, 2018. » The operational self-sufficiency and financial self-sufficiency for Thitsar Ooyin Dry Zone are 161.1% and 141.2% respectively. » 10,963 households has USD 1.86 million loan outstanding amount and utilized 63 percent in livestock, 18 percent in agriculture and 18 percent in production & services. 83% of all active members are women. 79.7% of all group leaders are women and 65.3% of VCS/BCS credit committee members are women. |

| Sr. | IPs, Project title, Time frame, budget | Important Updates |
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| 4 | <p>GRET</p> <p>Expanding Rural Financial Markets by Institutionalizing Chin MFI</p> <p>14/12/2015 to 31/12/2018</p> <p>USD 1,320,176</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » GRET's technical support to the Chin MFI will be crucial for the coordination of the legalisation process as well as the strengthening of their managerial, institutional and operational capacities, with the support of external experts. Chin MFI intends to expand its pro-poor financial services to a new area, the Kalay Township. This project proposes new products to rural households that will be tested through a pilot phase and then rolled out in the different townships. » To enhance managers' capacity, project provided in-house trainings such MIS training, Excel training, C4D training for MFI managers and office staff. » Kredits Mission for the Implementation of Quick Book (accounting software) in November 2018 in Chin Branches – Training of 6 accountants, 3 cashiers, 1 Finance Officer and 4 Managers on Quick Book » GRET conducted series of meetings and senior management team members involved and discussed about human resources policies and processes, financial management processes, and other managerial issues of the future company. Finalized the Risk Management Manual & Tools. » GRET has obtained a no-cost extension up to June 2019 to ensure the achievement of the expansion's objectives. » Launched a new branch in Kalay township, it is providing loans to 657 borrowers in 7 Villages and their loan portfolio is USD 4.2 million. » The operational self-sufficiency and financial self-sufficiency for Thitsar Ooyin (Chin) are 135.4% and 103.8% respectively. » TSO (Chin) is providing financial services to 10,613 households has USD 1.96 million loan outstanding amount and utilized 68 percent in livestock, 11 percent in agriculture, 18 percent in production & services and 3 percent in group loan. 68% of all active members are women. |
| 5 | <p>International Finance Corporation (IFC)</p> <p>Capacity building for Inclusive Financial Sector</p> <p>USD 3,619,552</p> <p>01/07/2014 to 30/06/18</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>This programme is supporting two areas of financial inclusion sector in terms of sector level and institutional level.</p> <p>Through the sector level support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Project supported MMFA and signed a cooperation agreement in March 2018 with them. IFC involved the MMFA member needs assessment to focus on more training areas and development of five-year business plan for MMFA. IFC continued helping MMFA's management and executive committee to enhance its operational and advocacy capacities. » IFC continued delivery of the responsible finance training program for regulators. Participants from 16 MFIs and Financial Regulatory Department. » IFC also held a two-day workshop on corporate governance (CG) for MFIs in collaboration with the MMFA to improve corporate governance frameworks and practices of microfinance provider as they become larger and engage in providing a diversified array of services to a larger client base, which is key to their long-term sustainability. <p>Institutional level support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Vision Fund: Together with VisionFund, IFC also selected a number of managers to receive direct coaching in-the-field on how to apply this training in their actual projects. These projects related to product development, introduction of new systems, efficiency improvement and delinquency reduction and IT and reporting systems improvement. IFC coached the managers and reviewed the projects, identifying areas of improvement and lessons learned for further implementation by VisionFund managers. » Fullerton Myanmar (FFMCL): In March 2018, IFC disbursed the fifth tranche of the performance-based grant to Fullerton, in the amount of \$300,000, bringing the cumulative disbursement IFC to \$1,000,000 grant. With this disbursement IFC completed the full grant amount, which helps Fullerton to expand and build staff capacity, develop new products and, going forward, roll out a responsible finance strategy. In addition to the grant, as previously reported, IFC has also supported FFMCL with a loan of \$6 million to foster its portfolio expansion. As of December 2018, Fullerton's total portfolio had grown to 139,099 clients in 62 townships, The value of its loan outstanding portfolio had also increased to \$33.7 million, an increase of 7.5 million from December 2017, with a very controlled portfolio at risk (PAR) >30 days of 0.414%. The operational self-sufficiency and financial self-sufficiency for Fullerton are 126% and 95% respectively. |

| Sr. | IPs, Project title, Time frame, budget | Important Updates |
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| 6 | <p>PACT Global Microfinance Fund (PGMF)</p> <p>Myanmar Access to Rural Credit (MARC)</p> <p>USD 7,327,324</p> <p>16/07/2012 to 15/07/2017</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>PGMF provided capacity development support to nine local microfinance organisations aiming to operational and financial self-sufficiency. Project was extended to 30 June 2019 in order to facilitate transformation process from NGO based MFI to Company based MFI.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 4 partners (ECLOF, BDA, MHDO and AYO) have gotten the microfinance license from Financial Regulatory Department (FRD) for new Microfinance Company. » 3 partners (Wanlark Foundation, YMCA and The Sun Institute) got the recommendation from state level FRD and have made presentation to Microfinance Business Supervisory Committee as the final stage to get the microfinance license from FRD. » 2 MFIs (SVS and Yadana Mitta) are waiting approval from respective regional FRD. » PGMF provided the refresher training for operation management to the Branch Managers and Assistant Branch Managers on 15 Nov 18 to 18 Nov 18. A total of 26 persons attended this training. » PGMF/MARC is trying to set up internal audit in partner MFIs and conducting on the job training to the internal auditors from each partner while they were auditing. |
| 7 | <p>PACT Global Microfinance Fund (PGMF)</p> <p>Rakhine Access to Financial Inclusion (RAFIN)</p> <p>USD 8,323,497</p> <p>14/12/2015 to 30/6/ 2019</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>The objective of RAFIN Project is to open microfinance units to provide financial services to new clients in Rakhine.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Providing financial services to eight townships in Rakhine area: in Gwa, Thandwe, Ann, Kyaukphyu, Toungup, Min Bya, Maye Pon and Ramree » Total number of clients - 78,440 clients (98% women) » Total number of collection center - 1,741 villages » Total loan disbursement -USD 37.7 million » Percentage of loans – 92 percent small business and livestock » The overall institutional level portfolio is USD 210.35 million with 985,458 clients in 79 townships |
| 8 | <p>Proximity Designs</p> <p>Financial Inclusion—Moving Ahead</p> <p>Budget: USD 5,097,164</p> <p>From 01/10/2015 to 30/06/2019</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>This project is under the management of Proximity Designs however with the supporting of LIFT, this project was transformed to start as Proximity Finance Microfinance Company Limited. Proximity Finance has designed new loan products for specific market segments for migrant families and micro-entrepreneurs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Piloted and rolled out 2,200 loans for migrant families in the Dry Zone: Myingyan, Magway, Monywa, Pakokku and Mahlaing. » Enterprise loan was disbursed to 8,800 families in Dry Zone. » PF disbursed USD 26.4 million to 99,939 clients (66% of clients are women) in 57 townships. They received 122,324 loans and current loan portfolio is USD 18.8 million. |
| 9 | <p>World Vision Myanmar/Vision Fund Myanmar (VFM)</p> <p>Financial Inclusion for</p> <p>Budget: USD 4,500,000</p> <p>12/11/ 2015 – 30/6/2019</p> <p>USD800,000</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>The project aims to provide financial services in LIFT's upland target areas through innovative financial services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » <u>Loan disbursement (number and amount of loans):</u> In 2018 LIFT branches disbursed loans to 12,620 new clients, with 31,757 total clients reached. LIFT branches reached 29,857 total active clients with \$7,162,592.86 loan portfolio outstanding. Basic business credit was disbursed through VFM funding source while new products (SSAT, refinancing and credit line) were funded by LIFT. Individual Development Saving Account (IDA) was introduced to clients who are living under 1.5 USD per day within project period. » <u>Product development:</u> The debt refinancing⁹⁹ product is now available in six non-LIFT fund branches in the Mandalay area and SSAT loans available in one non-LIFT branch. » <u>Savings Update:</u> LIFT branches mobilized up to 31 December 2018, \$1,560,101 of voluntary and compulsory savings from 41,341 clients. » The overall institutional level portfolio is USD 36 million with 187,584 clients in 48 townships |

⁹⁹ The June 2018 Semi-Annual report stated two non-LIFT funded branches had introduced Credit Line loans; they had instead introduced debt refinancing loans.

| Sr. | IPs, Project title, Time frame, budget | Important Updates |
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| 10 | <p>Vision Fund International</p> <p>Financial Inclusion in the Garment Sector</p> <p>5/9/2017 to 30/6/2019</p> <p>USD800,000</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>The project aims to reduce the number of migrants adopting harmful coping methods such as acquiring unsustainable debt and reducing food consumption. This will be achieved by the development of a tailored financial service that addresses the barriers to migrant workers face accessing low interest loans and savings products.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Hlaing Thar Yar 2 branch (HTY2) opened in January 2018. Originally, this was a sub-branch operating out of Hlaing Thar Yar 1 (HTY1) to service existing migrant workers. » VFM was able to enter into partnerships with 15 factories and have disbursed loans in these factories. » The 1st disbursement for garment workers is in the ZES garment factory on 19 January 2019. Project disbursed USD 805,030 to 2,343 migrant workers/family during 2018. |
| 11 | <p>Vision Fund International (VFI)</p> <p>Provision of sustainable and Inclusive Financial Services in Central Rakhine communities</p> <p>15/9/2018 to 14/9/2021</p> <p>USD 3,500,000</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Inception period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Disbursements of 15,750,000MMK were made to 15 clients during the last week of December in Sittwe. |
| 12 | <p>The Currency Exchange Fund (TCX)</p> <p>Currency exchange risk hedging facility for microfinance institutions in Myanmar</p> <p>Nov/2016 to Dec/2018</p> <p>USD 10,000,000</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The USD 10 million LIFT subsidy allowed TCX to hedge 40 loans issued by 11 lenders for 12 MFIs in Myanmar; » TCX hedged MMK 109.3 billion of funding equivalent to USD 86 million of debt; » In receiving kyat loans, the MFIs served 337,642 clients all together. The average loan size was USD 237. 84% of these clients are women, 64% of these clients live in rural areas. This means that TCX indirectly hedged approximately 337,642 borrowers (including 283,619 women). » In response to the LIFT facility, the workforce of the 12 MFIs increased by 21% (1,027 new jobs created within the MFIs). |

Decent Work and Labour Mobility

| Sr. | IPs, Project title, Time frame, budget | Important Updates |
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| 1 | <p>BBC Media Action</p> <p>Decent Work and Labour Migration for Media (Yay Kyi Yar) project</p> <p>USD 3,035,943</p> <p>01/10/2016 to 30/09/2020</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » <i>Yay Kyi Yar</i> radio show continued to be broadcast until March 2019 on MRTV and MAP Radio and 10 episodes of <i>Yay Kyi Yar</i> radio show (episodes 69 – 78) were produced and broadcast. » An open radio discussion on Safe and Fair migration was held in Chaing Mai in collaboration with MAP foundation. » The <i>Yay Kyi Yar</i> team produced three Facebook Live episodes. Each of these episodes were also repurposed for broadcast on the <i>Yay Kyi Yar</i> radio show. » BBC Media Action produced a Research Brief titled 'Helping radio listeners manage their money in Myanmar'. The paper presented how and why the financial management component of the programme was particularly successful. » The pilot for the <i>Yay Kyi Yar</i> TV discussion show was recorded in Patheingyi, Ayeyarwaddy Region with the topic "Domestic worker rights". This was followed in September by a recording in Magway on "Discrimination in the Workplace"; on "Skill Development and Training" in October in Mandalay; "Irregular Migration" in November in Yangon; on "Labour Unions" in Bago and in December in Hpa-an on "Child Labour". » <i>Yay Kyi Yar</i> TV show's broadcast agreements with DVB and Mizzima were signed in Dec 2019. The agreement is to broadcast <i>Yay Kyi Yar</i> discussion show every week starting in January 2020. » A total of 3 Media and Migration workshops were conducted in Yangon, Chin and Kachin States respectively and were attended by 52 representatives from government, CSOs, labour unions and media organizations. » The <i>Yay Kyi Yar</i> Facebook page publishes content on decent work and labour mobility in Burmese, with the page receiving 756,698 likes. A total of 114 posts were published during the year, including cartoons, photos and videos. » The request for proposal (RFP) was launched in December to commission the impact evaluation of <i>Yay Kyi Yar</i> TV programme to an external agency. » Coaching was completed with media partners, which have produced post-training feature stories on migration and have included migration-related topics in their content. » Three Open Radio Day discussion activities were conducted by three media partners in Tanintharyi, Kayah and Chiang Mai (Thailand) and in two languages-Shan and Thai. » BBC Media Action, in collaboration with the International Labour Organization, organised a week-long capacity building workshop on "Reporting on ASEAN Migration" for 12 senior journalists and editors in Yangon and Bangkok. |

| Sr. | IPs, Project title, Time frame, budget | Important Updates |
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| 2 | <p>International Labour Organization (ILO)</p> <p>Development of Internal and International Labour Migration Governance (DIILM) project</p> <p>USD 3,999,752</p> <p>01/02/2016 to 31/12/2020</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » ILO organised an International Migrants Day event in collaboration with the CSO and Labour Organisation network. At the event, the Chair of the parliamentary Committee on Immigration, Local and Overseas Workers announced to the 1,000 workers present that a bill on the protection of domestic workers has been drafted and shared with other committees for input. » The project held a series of consultations with the Women and Peace MP Group providing technical input for the development of a bill on protection of domestic workers. » The Legal Gap Analysis on labour protection for domestic workers was launched in Yangon and Mandalay to increase the support for the development of a law on domestic work. » The project succeeded in advocating for the ban on domestic workers going to work overseas to be lifted in March 2019 through public campaigns, events and meetings with policymakers. » The project has been active in providing inputs into the 2nd Five-Year National Plan of Action on migration and ensuring the inclusion of labour organisations and civil society not only in its development but as implementing partners. » Consultations were held with the CSO and LO Network for Migrants and MOEAF to discuss priority areas of the NPA for implementation. » The project provided informal technical inputs on the draft Memorandum of Collaboration on Social Security between Malaysia and Myanmar. » A workshop was convened in November at the suggestion of the Union Minister to revisit the rules developed for implementation of the amended Settlement of Labour Disputes Law. » The project has succeeded in advocating for the decentralisation of recruitment of migrant workers through a MOLIP directive to MOEAF allowing recruitment agencies to set up branches in the States and Regions. » The project eliminated the discriminatory practice of only recruiting men for labour attaché positions, with MOLIP removing the men-only criteria in January. » A survey on the skills of returned migrant workers was conducted and a draft report will be released in January 2020. » Five groups of eight domestic workers completed the five-week skills training program provided by Three Good Spoons. » The Karen Baptist Convention provided awareness training to 246 domestic workers and 265 local leaders, increasing their knowledge about safe migration and domestic workers' rights. The domestic workers also formed a group on Viber to stay in touch and support each other. » Further training was provided for the staff managing the complaints mechanism on maintaining records of complaints which enabled the Department of Labour to generate more detailed and useful analysis on the complaints received. » The project delivered a two-day training for Labour Attachés in April. A resource person from MAP Foundation presented on the impact of changes of the Thai policy on migrants and outlined the issues where migrants expected assistance from the Labour Attachés and provided key contacts of active CSOs in Thailand to support the work of the Labour Attachés. » The project supported the development of six Migrant Information Centres. Over 12,000 migrants have received direct services from the Centres with a further 40,000 receiving information through distribution of physical IEC materials or through social media. A total of 1,857 migrants have reported grievances and MMK658m has been awarded to complainants in settlements. » The project organised a twinning study tour in February 2019. Participants from Patheingyi, including Ayeyawaddy Regional Parliamentarians, MOLIP, Anti trafficking police, labour Organizations and CSOs visited a garment factory, factory workers dormitories, Labour exchange office, immigration office and services provided by LOs and CSOs in Yangon to better understand the situation for migrants. » The paper "Labour Migration Data for Evidence Based Policies: An Appraisal of Data and Statistics on International Labour Migration" was published in Myanmar language. It provides an overview of the current statistics available, proposing the type of statistics and information needed for the development of evidence based labour migration policies. |

| Sr. | IPs, Project title, Time frame, budget | Important Updates |
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| 3 | <p>International Organization for Migration</p> <p>Capitalising Human Mobility for Poverty Alleviation and Inclusive Development in Myanmar (CHIME) project</p> <p>USD 1,999,218</p> <p>01/01/2016 to 30/06/2019</p> <p>Closed</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The CHIME research report – a mixed-methods study on internal and international migration in Ayeyarwady Region, Mandalay Region, Shan State and Rakhine State – was published on the IOM website. » An executive summary, six thematic briefs (agriculture, urbanisation, gender, indebtedness, decent work and community impact) and four regional briefs (on Ayeyarwady, Rakhine, Shan and Dry Zone) were produced and disseminated in print and electronic format. » IOM and DVB entered into a partnership to promote CHIME thematic findings through the production of three broadcast quality documentaries focused on CHIME's target states and regions. » CHIME-related content was regularly posted on the Miss Migration Facebook page and cross-posted on DVB's Facebook page, giving CHIME-related videos reach even beyond Myanmar. » IOM and DVB have produced 36 videos (32 short videos + 3 CHIME thematic documentaries + 1 documentary on the CHIME workshops). All videos are available at the Miss Migration Facebook page » A series of six dissemination workshops to discuss CHIME findings on the impact of migration were held in Naypyitaw, Mandalay, Taunggyi, Sittwe, Patheingyi and Yangon. There were 418 representatives from Government, civil society organizations and UN agencies in attendance. » In collaboration with Metta Development Foundation, the project conducted 37 community-based dialogues in villages in northern Shan State, as well as a project review meeting at Pyin Oo Lwin Township at the end of the project. A total of 1250 people from 109 villages attended the sessions, with participants including religious, community, student, youth and ethnic minority leaders. » Between May and June 2019, the project collected data and held community-based dialogue sessions with migrant workers in Kon Hein, Mai Pan, Moe Nai and Linn Khey townships in southern Shan State. This also included research on migrant workers' knowledge of labour laws. |
| 4 | <p>International Organization for Migration</p> <p>Increasing the Development Impact of Migration through Governance and Partnership (Twe Let) project</p> <p>USD 12,944,521</p> <p>01/01/2017 to 30/06/2021</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Pre-migration outreach (PMO) training sessions was conducted in 135 villages, reaching 4,217 beneficiaries in Shan State and Dry Zone. » In Chin State, migration awareness trainings for learners of skills development courses, thematic migration awareness trainings and CBOs/CSOs capacity building workshops were provided to 643 beneficiaries. » Theatre shows were performed to disseminate safe migration messages in 49 villages of Tedim, Tonzang and Mindat townships, as well as two additional shows in Tedim town in Chin State, reaching 11,809 beneficiaries. » Hybrid migration training sessions were delivered in 33 village tracts in Shan and Mon States, reaching 652 beneficiaries. » Edutainment sessions on safe migration in 17 village tracts, reaching 15,567 individuals in 10 townships of Dry Zone and Shan State. » Income generation and working capital management reflection workshop was organised with 51 field trainers and project management staff. » Income generation and working capital management training was delivered to 444 beneficiaries and trainings on Importance of Remittance Savings were organised with the surplus budget, reaching a total of 2,344 beneficiaries in 73 villages in Dry Zone. » Three Training of Coaches on micro-enterprise start-up were organised in Chin, Mon and Shan States, training a total of 44 partner coaches. » Community-based Saving Group training sessions were completed for a total of 124 beneficiaries, which resulted in the formation of seven groups. » A total of 31 training sessions on the importance of remittance saving for remittance-receiving households were organised, reaching 906 beneficiaries in seven target townships of Chin State. » A total of 554 beneficiaries completed 31 types of skills development trainings in Mon, Shan and Chin States, as well as in the Dry Zone. » A total of 984 people secured new jobs and/or started new businesses in the target states and regions. » In collaboration with the Department of Labour, migration and development consultation workshops were organised to discuss migration and development linkages and the positive and negative impacts of labour migration on migrants, households and communities in Myingyan, Pakkoku, Taunggyi, Mandalay, Mawlamyine and Hakha. » The project carried out a research capacity assessment, as well as began developing research outlines for four research studies on migration in Myanmar, in collaboration with CESD. » The project reached an institutional agreement with Australian National University (ANU) to provide research capacity building workshops, as well as through support for research design. |

| Sr. | IPs, Project title, Time frame, budget | Important Updates |
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| 5 | <p>CARE</p> <p>Aung Myin Hmu Project - Industry Solutions for Safe Employment</p> <p>USD 5,985,643</p> <p>01/03/2017 to 30/06/2021</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 95% of AMH graduates were able to pass the NSSA assessment and became NSSA approved workers (204 registered and 193 passed). » Merchandising and Computer Aided Design/Computer Aided Manufacturing (CAD/CAM) training and Supervisory Skills Training were launched, in collaboration with ILO's Better Work programme. » 2460 trainees graduated from AMH Training Centre, MOBA Training Centre and factory-based training lines. » 1092 trainees completed their skills training at the Aung Myin Hmu training center since the start of the project. » Four National Occupational Competency Standards for occupational safety and health and compliance officers were completed in collaboration with the Fair Wear Foundation. » Three National Occupational Competency Standards are in progress, in collaboration with the ILO Vision Zero project. » An agreement was reached with Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population on a fee-for-service model to ensure the sustainability of the training. » The launch of the second phase training of trainers for sewing machine operators was organised and production of a promotional video was completed. » Sexual harassment and gender-based violence awareness messages were shared with 15,826 beneficiaries through trainings, workshops and special events. » 134 community members from 3 wards participated in community dialogue sessions on gender-based violence. » 63 male participants from 3 wards attended engaging men training on gender-based violence. » 28 service providers from Government and CSOs received training on gender, gender-based violence and survivor-centered approach. » 155 participants from 13 factories, including human resource and compliance managers and workplace anti-sexual harassment committee members, participated in training of trainers on prevention and response to sexual harassment in the workplace. » Factory-level campaigns/launching events to sensitize workers to sexual harassment were initiated in four factories started. » 5 out of 10 proposed changes to the Occupation Safety and Health law related to gender sensitivity and sexual harassment were adopted due to the collective advocacy effort of CARE, Fair Wear Foundation, Gender Equality Network and APHEDA. » Project staff and partners successfully advocated with Government delegates to vote for the ILO Convention 190 before and during the International Labour Conference. » Input from workers' representatives of 10 garment factories, together with inputs from factory management, was secured on the model workplace policy on prevention of sexual harassment. » 7,562 migrant women from garment factories participated in 87 Thone Pan Hla Sunday Café events to obtain essential information and build supportive friendships, facilitated by 70 Thone Pan Hla peer leaders. » Sunday Café's take home messages were disseminated to 64,400 garment workers. » 2,184 migrant women participated in 9 Thone Pan Hla holiday events. » 97 beneficiaries attended the eight-week basic computer training course held at Thone Pan Hla center on Sunday afternoons and evenings. » 184 participants attended trainings at Thone Pan Hla on leave entitlements in the updated labour law. » 85,548 migrant workers received 44 Thone Pan Hla Sunday blast messages, providing relevant and up-to-date information. » 143 migrant women received immediate support services, connecting with Thone Pan Hla through its Crisis Hotline. » 379 AMH Training Center graduates received basic life skills training. » 8 AMH trainees were housed free of charge at the Thone Pan Hla Hostels. » 295 AMH graduates joined informal peer discussions with Thone Pan Hla graduates to support placement in factories with better working conditions. » 19 AMH women graduated from a fashion design skills training program to increase their income. |

| Sr. | IPs, Project title, Time frame, budget | Important Updates |
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| 6 | <p>Eden Ministry</p> <p>Eden Project to Rescue Myanmar Migrant Women and Girls who have been Trafficked for the Purposes of Sexual Exploitation or Forced Marriage</p> <p>USD 946,975</p> <p>From 01/03/2017 to 31/03/2021</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 34 beneficiaries in red-light districts were tested for HIV. » Two new shelter facilities were opened in Lashio and Yangon. » 17 trafficking survivors were identified through outreach and a total of 44 survivors received shelter services and trauma counselling. » 75 NGO staff received trauma-informed care training. » Employment and vocational trainings were provided to 44 women, including for jewellery-making, hair dressing and beauty therapy, basic computer skills, sales and marketing, financial literacy, sewing and mathematics, as well as in Burmese, Chinese and English languages. » A workshop was held to develop a code of conduct for supporting survivors of trafficking during the criminal justice process. » State Counselor Daw Aung Sun Suu Kyi toured the Eden facilities and met with the project staff and beneficiaries. |
| 7 | <p>International Organization for Migration</p> <p>Migration as a Livelihood Diversification Strategy in the Delta project</p> <p>USD 1,549,100</p> <p>15/12/2015 to 30/06/2020</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Benefitting from Migration (BFM) training was provided to 7,994 people in 200 villages. » A mid-term workshop was conducted with partner CSOs to fine-tune the BFM training roll-out. » A consultancy was organised to develop recommendations for making the BFM training more accessible to beneficiaries with low literacy and numeracy skills. » 232 volunteer 'safe migration promoters' (SMPs) were trained to become safe migration focal points in their communities. They were able to reach 2,000 beneficiaries with safe migration information. » Miss Migration chatbot was linked up with the Navigator app and integrated into Facebook Messenger. » Revolving funds for migration were rolled out in 41 villages and disbursed a total of MMK 60,788,600 worth of migration-related loans to 756 beneficiaries. » 440 participants from migrant-sending households received 'tier 1' financial literacy trainings. » 244 participants from migrant-sending households received 'tier 2' micro-enterprise start-up coaching. » 234 aspirant migrants and members of migrant-sending households graduated from skills development training courses. » Two workshops were organised to understand the positive and negative impacts of circular migration in the Delta and plan activities to leverage circular migration for development. » Three trainings were organised for CSOs partners to increase their organisational capacity on monitoring and evaluation, Do No Harm principles and proposal writing and organisational development. |
| 8 | <p>Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)</p> <p>Vocational Education to Support IDPs and Host Communities (VESI) project</p> <p>USD 2,200,00</p> <p>01/07/2019 to 30/06/2022</p> <p>Inception</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The project staff were recruited in Kachin and Northern Shan States and contracting was completed with the local CSO partners. » A project orientation meeting was held for all of the consortium partners in Yangon. » A project launch was organised with participants from the Union-level Department of TVET in Naypyidaw to introduce the project for approval and ensure their full participation and support during the implementation period. » Project orientation workshops were held with local stakeholders, including the Kachin Minister of Social Welfare, principles from Government Technological High Schools and community/camp leadership in Myitkyina, Bhamo and Lashio. » A labour market Survey was conducted in 3 geographical areas to make evidence-based decisions related to selection of training courses, training content and employability by the project. The survey gathered perspectives of IDPs and host communities, as well as the private sector, CSOs and INGOS. » Capacity building on facilitation and pedagogical skills, as well as on nutrition, was provided for 36 vocational trainers in targeted areas, in collaboration with Save the Children. » Outreach to raise awareness on vocational training was conducted in the targeted communities in Lashio and Bhamo, reaching a total of 833 people. These awareness sessions were aimed at ensuring all potential beneficiaries have equal opportunity to benefit from the project, including women, youth and people with disabilities. |

| Sr. | IPs, Project title, Time frame, budget | Important Updates |
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| 9 | <p>International Organization for Migration</p> <p>Strengthening the resilience of conflict-affected communities in Kachin and Northern Shan states through increased safe and rewarding migration" (SAFE) project</p> <p>USD 1,182, 313</p> <p>From 15/07/2019 to 30/06/2022</p> <p>Inception</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Staff recruitment was completed for the project in Myitkyina, Lashio and Yangon. » Monthly project management and quarterly project steering committee meetings were organised to discuss the project strategies/approaches, work plans, resource management, Monitoring and Evaluation for Accountability and Learning (MEAL) and baseline plans. » Metta identified and reached out to 7 CSOs to establish field partnerships in the target areas. » Metta and the CSO partners finalised the selection of the project's target villages and IDP camps in Kachin in consultation with village leaders. » 7 project orientation meetings were conducted with each CSO partner and 2 state-level project orientation workshops were held in Kachin and Northern Shan States. » An introductory consultative workshop was held place in Nay Pyi Taw with representatives from relevant government departments to obtain the Government's support and recommendations for the SAFE project. » Briefings on the SAFE project were provided to the Human Trafficking Working Group in Yangon and the Protection Sub-Working Group in Myitkyina. » A MEAL workshop was held with 8 staff from Metta and IOM to support the development and implementation of the project MEAL Plan. » IOM and Metta developed and conducted capacity assessments of the CSO partners to understand their organisational capacity and development needs. » Data collection on the migration situation and patterns in Northern Shan and Kachin was conducted, completing 100 qualitative interviews. » A safe migration curriculum adaptation workshop was conducted for partner CSOs from both Kachin and Northern Shan States. » Two assessments were conducted with the Department of Labour in Myitkyina and Muse to support the establishment of Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) in 2020. » Case management flow charts and training materials on direct assistance and reintegration services for vulnerable migrants and survivors of trafficking were developed and provided to CSO partners. |
| 10 | <p>World Vision</p> <p>See, Hear, Empower (SHE): Supporting Inclusive and Transformative Livelihoods for IDP and Host Communities in Kachin project</p> <p>USD 2,584,7441</p> <p>05/07/2019 to 30/06/2022</p> <p>Inception</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » A field office was opened in Myitkyina township and recruitment and induction of all field and Yangon-based staff was completed » Meetings were held with the implementing partners to plan the activities and train them on the technical approaches to be used » A training of trainers was organised for 10 participants on the ILO's Start and Improve Your Business enterprise development training methodology. The participants were trained on how to promote entrepreneurship, tailored for audiences that have limited literacy and numeracy capabilities. » The project reached out to Aung Myin Hmu Training Centre to learn how to improve the Pre-TVET training by including Labor Rights topics, with a training of trainers planned soon. » Research on livelihoods in Kachin was conducted utilizing a household economy approach in 12 IDP camps in 4 townships to support the development of interventions. |
| 11 | <p>Women's Organization Network</p> <p>Ending Vulnerability and Exploitation of Migrant Workers (EVE) project</p> <p>USD 1,058,749</p> <p>From 10/10/2019 to 30/09/2022</p> <p>Inception</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Recruitment was completed for contracted technical and administrative staff for the project. » A MEAL framework development and planning workshop was conducted. » Coordination meetings were held between WON and its four implementing partners to develop the workplan and budget for 2020, support the implementation of the MEAL system and explain LIFT requirements. » Two '16 Days Events' were organised in Hlaing Thar Yar and Dagon Seikkan to raise awareness about gender-based violence and how to access legal assistance for a total of 383 participants. » Four migrant support centers were setup in Hlaing Thar Yar and Dagon Myo Thit to provide a comprehensive package of support to newly arrived migrant workers, including temporary housing, vocational training, counselling, peer networking and job matching services. |

| Sr. | IPs, Project title, Time frame, budget | Important Updates |
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| 12 | <p>ActionAid</p> <p>Safe Migration for Decent Work in the Peri-Urban Areas of Yangon (SECURE) project</p> <p>USD 2,500,000</p> <p>21/10/2019 to 30/09/2022</p> <p>Inception</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Contracting and staff recruitment was completed for all project partners. » Areas in which project partners need training support (financial management, procurement, and M&E) were identified to arrange and plan for ongoing capacity building. » Informal discussions were conducted in the targeted townships to ensure community leaders and township administrators were aware and in support of the proposed project activities. » Inception workshops were held with CSO and labour organizations and with the Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association to finalize the project activities, define roles and responsibilities and develop the MEAL framework. » An all-day IEC Workshop was held with CSO and labour organizations, including training on LIFT Communication Guidelines. Existing IEC materials were reviewed and the gaps were identified for development of new materials. » A concept note for an action research project on employer-provided childcare services for migrant workers was developed in collaboration with the Asian Institute of Technology. » Legal Clinic Myanmar provided counselling, mediation and legal services for 41 cases related to gender-based violence. A further 67 phone calls were received for the provision of legal advice through their 24-hour hotlines services. |
| 13 | <p>People in Need</p> <p>Aye Chan Thaw Ein: Empowering Labour Migrants in Shwe Pyi Thar project</p> <p>USD 3,158,950</p> <p>10/10/2019 to 30/09/2022</p> <p>Inception</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The project team was recruited and sub-contracts were completed with HELVETAS and Koe Koe Tech. » The Project Steering Committee was formed and held its first meeting in mid-November. » Meetings were held with YCDC to obtain approval for implementation of the project. » Four worker center locations have been identified in Shwe Pyi Thar township to be managed by Solidarity Trade Union of Myanmar. » Coordination meetings were held with the other LIFT IPs to build synergies and avoid overlapping project activities. |
| 14 | <p>World Vision Myanmar</p> <p>Project: Growing Livelihoods in Bogale Township (costed extension) Budget: USD 833,033</p> <p>1 January, 2019 - 30 June 2020</p> | <p>This project has three main components: vocational training, entrepreneurship intervention for women, and village savings and loan association (VSLA). The project reached 3,570 new beneficiaries in 60 villages of Bogale.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Vocational Training: In 2019, there were 368 trainees in 13 vocational trainings including: pharmacist & nurse aids, garment, tailoring, driving & mechanics, hospitality, beauty salon, welding and motor repair. The average income of those who have gained employment is USD 998 a year, above the target of USD 500. » Entrepreneurship intervention for women: 304 women across 60 project villages were trained on Business Skills, GYB-Generate Your Business and 289 women for SYB-Start Your Business, until they were able to create a business plan with the guidance of the trainers. Currently, there are 166 small businesses with 22 types of businesses and they received an average grant size of MMK 250,000 (USD 167). » Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA): The project facilitated formation of 87 VSLA groups in 60 villages with 1,451 members (88% women). Total portfolio of these 87 VSLA is about MMK 81 million. The groups are providing the loan to the members with the interest rate of 2% to 3% per month. |

ANNEX 5: POLICY ENGAGEMENT IN 2019

| Agriculture, Markets & Food Systems | Description |
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| <p>Policy Issue: Agriculture value chains</p> <p>LIFT IP: Michigan State University</p> <p>Collaborators: CESD, IFPRI, DOP, DAR and Yezin Agricultural University</p> | <p>Agri-food Value Chain Development in Myanmar: Implications for Livelihoods of the Rural Poor</p> <p>The project is composed of four components: 1) policy strategy advisory, 2) agri-food value chains, 3) household and community livelihoods and 4) capacity and network building.</p> <p><u>Policy strategy advisory</u> In 2019, the project produced a report titled Agricultural Research Capacity and Extension Linkages in Myanmar: Assessment and Recommendations with findings on current capacity and constraints of Myanmar research systems to support the development of a long-term agricultural research masterplan for Department of Agricultural Research. The project also worked with the Agricultural Policy Unit to conduct monthly 'policy free talks' where all MoALI staff can freely join policy presentations and open discussions. Other policy strategy advising tasks involve project personnel co-facilitating the crop and irrigation subsector coordination group's discussion on the Agriculture Development Strategy implementation at ARDSCG meeting in February 2019 and assisting the ministry in preparation of a concept note proposal to the South Korea's Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs for the establishment of a Myanmar Institute for Agriculture, Food and Rural Economy Policy.</p> <p><u>Agri-food value chains and household and communities livelihoods</u> In 2019, two reports from the Rural Economy and Agriculture Dry Zone Survey (READZ) were published. <i>Agricultural Machinery Supply Businesses In Myanmar's Dry Zone: Growth and Transformation Report</i> finds that Dry Zone now have a large number of machinery supply businesses. Finance for agricultural machinery purchases is widely available with increasing presence of banks, contributing to the rapid growth of machinery sales. <i>The Edible Oil Milling Sector in Myanmar's Dry Zone</i> report finds that groundnut is the most important crop processed by Dry Zone millers but the domestic mill sector utilizes only a small share of Myanmar's total oilseed production. The report also provides recommendations to revitalise the oil mill sector.</p> <p>In 2019, two reports from the Shan Household Agriculture and Rural Economy Survey (SHARES) were also published. <i>Rural Transformation in Southern Shan State: Results from the Community Component of the Shan Agriculture and Rural Economy Survey</i> report finds that agricultural traders are the most important source of credit in villages. Access to credit from formal sources has improved over the past five years and interest rates on informal loans are also significantly reduced. <i>Migration in Southern Shan State: Characteristics and Outcomes</i> report finds that nearly one in three households have a migrated household member. International migrants outnumber domestic migrants, but domestic migration is growing more rapidly. Thailand and urban areas of Shan State are the most common destinations for migrants from southern Shan.</p> <p>During the reporting period, the project produced numerous journal articles, research papers and research highlights and drafted reports to be finalised in next reporting period.</p> <p><u>Capacity and network building</u> The project conducted a number of capacity and network building events such as seminars, presentations, workshops and meetings in 2019. Among them, Agriculture Value Chains, and Rural Transformation in Myanmar: Half a Decade of Evidence-based Policy Research Workshop synthesized all key research findings during the project tenure.</p> |

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| <p>Policy Issue: Land tenure policies</p> <p>LIFT IP: Land Core Group (LCG)</p> <p>Collaborators: MONREC, MOALI, CSOs and development partners</p> | <p>Fostering equitable access and control over land and related natural resources in Myanmar project</p> <p>In 2019, the project contributed in drafting <i>National Land Law</i> by the government. When the Technical Advisory Group to the National Land Use Council was set up, the Executive Director of LCG became a member of the Group. The National Land Law Formulation and Law Harmonization Working Committee was also set up. The Committee was chaired by the Union Attorney General. LCG secured verbal commitments from the Union Attorney General Office to follow the guidance of the National Land Use Policy in drafting the National Land Law.</p> <p>Working closely with Forest Department, CSOs and communities, the project facilitated nation-wide public consultations on the Forest Rules development. The Forest Department has revised the draft rules in harmonization with key inputs from public consultations and submitted the revised version to the Union Attorney General Office.</p> <p>The projects also successfully conducted three workshops with Department of Agricultural Land Management and Statistics at the union level: 1) a departmental performance review workshop, 2) a Farmland Law review workshop, and 3) a workshop on alluvial soil administration. In the Farmland Law review workshop, Department of Agricultural Land Management and Statistics (DALMS) presented its drafted amendments to the Farmland Law and key members of the parliament committed to use them in the next round of discussion on the draft Farmland Law amendment in the Pyithu Hluttaw. In the alluvial soil administration workshop, DALMS invited CSOs to participate.</p> <p>The project also produced a number of land researches and studies. These include 10 case studies on <i>Land Grabbing in Myanmar</i>, by partner CSOs, Land and Forest Governance in the Naga Village Republic, by Resource Rights for the Indigenous People, and a Comparative Study of Land Use and Land Tenure Change in Myanmar, by the faculty of the University of Forestry.</p> |
| <p>Policy Issue: Agricultural development</p> <p>LIFT IP: International Fertilizer Development Center</p> <p>Collaborator: DOA</p> | <p>Dry Zone Agro-Input and Farm Services Project aims to improve productivity and smallholder farmers' incomes via quality farm inputs and advisory services. The project also contributed to policy discussions around public-private partnership in Myanmar with its learnings.</p> <p>The project conducted a workshop to share the achievements of the Dry Zone project component so far and to open the new uplands project component on December 3, 2019 in Nay Pyi Taw. Farmer representatives, government officials, members of parliament, input service providers, EAO representatives and NGO representatives attended and discussed the role of the private sector and government line agencies in ensuring the promotion of good agricultural practice and safe use of fertilizers and agrochemicals.</p> <p>At the workshop, the Public-Private Partnership model was endorsed as a very cost-effective way to link DOA expertise with a large number of farmers via input service providers. Using this model by the project in 2019, 19 maize/paddy/sesame demonstration had achieved superior yield resulting average profit improvement over 2018 of 82% in maize and 58% in paddy although no 2018 data was available for sesame. That was due to paying more attention to the best agronomic practice in fertilizer management, timely pest control, soil management and good variety selection in the model.</p> <p>In 2019, the project produced two white papers that addressed fertilizer quality and conducted a study on the availability, local knowledge, and safe use and handling of crop protection products.</p> |
| <p>Policy Issue: Small-scale fishery development in Ayeyarwady Region</p> <p>LIFT IP: Network Activities Group</p> <p>Collaborators: Ayeyarwady Regional Government, Department of Fisheries, Ayeyarwady Regional Fishery Network</p> | <p>Improved Co-Management of Ayeyarwady Wetland Resources Project seeks to support fishing communities to aware and enjoy their legal rights from implementation of new regional policy and legislations in Ayeyarwady Delta.</p> <p>Since 2017, Ayeyarwady Regional Government has been implementing a policy that all fishing ground leases and tenders under a value of MMK 4 million and some that has a history of stakeholder conflict, shall be offered to communities to co-manage. For 2019/20 fishing season, the project supported communities in applying for 168 fishing grounds through local fishery co-management associations in 18 townships. That assistance worked well as 166 fishing grounds were awarded to the community groups at the auction.</p> <p>After supporting development of the new Ayeyarwady <i>Freshwater Fisheries Law</i> last year, the project in 2019 focused on the drafting of its by-laws that would support the registration and administration of community fisheries co-management organisations. The Ayeyarwady <i>Freshwater Fisheries By-Law</i> was enacted in April 10, 2019. The regional government requested NAG to print out and disseminate its copies. In August 2019, NAG produced 3,000 copies of By-law and shared it with the regional government, regional Department of Fisheries and other related government departments, Ayeyarwady Regional Fishery Network and communities. In collaboration with Department of Fisheries, the project also organised By-law awareness meetings in 19 townships in the region.</p> <p>The project also conducted a study on 'Kyar Phong' fishery workers and owners in Pyapon and Ye Townships after 'Kyar Phong' season, with an intension to safeguard decent work for raft labour. Then, it conducted a sharing workshop on findings from the study in Patheingyi on December 23, 2019.</p> |

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| <p>Policy Issue: Improved food security policy tools</p> <p>LIFT IP: Food Security Working Group (FSWG)</p> <p>Collaborators: MOALI, Bago Regional Government, LIFT, LCG, local CSOs, donors and INGOs</p> | <p>Harnessing Resources and Partnerships to Achieve Food Security in Myanmar Phase II</p> <p>This project aims to support effective food security policies in Myanmar by strengthening FSWG members' capacity and encouraging their effective engagement with policy makers. Towards this aim, FSWG technically and financially supported the MOALI to successfully formulate and launch Agriculture Development Strategy and Investment Plan (2017-2018 to 2021-2022) mainly via public consultation meetings in all states, regions and Nay Pyi Taw. In February 2019, FSWG project personnel made presentation on its involvement in this work at Agriculture and Rural Development Sector Coordination Meeting in Nay Pyi Taw to participants from MOALI, other ministerial and parliamentary representatives and development communities.</p> <p>In 2019, the project conducted four policy advocacy events together with member and partner organisations. These included village firewood plantation workshop (FSWG and Forest Department), CSO led consultation on <i>Forest Law and Rules</i> (FSWG, MATA and ATAA), research presentation on food safety and trade policy (FSWG and ICCO) and round table discussion on building resilience and sustainability of Myanmar agriculture sector (FSWG and IIRR). The project also produced 2 research reports, 2 policy analysis and 3 briefing papers.</p> <p>The project was requested by Bago Regional Government to assist in developing Agricultural Strategic Plan (2020-2025) for its Region. Therefore, starting from May 2019, FSWG provided technical and financial support to conduct coordination meeting with departmental and regional government officials to discuss strategic plan formulation in 2019 until the completion of the project in September 2019.</p> |
| Conflict-Affected Areas | |
| <p>Policy Issue: improved policy and governance in conflict-affected areas</p> <p>LIFT IP: The Border Consortium</p> <p>Collaborators: Back Pack Health Workers Team, Human Rights Foundation of Mon Land, Karen Department of Health and Welfare, Karen Environment and Social Action Network, Karen Human Rights Group, Karen Office for Relief and Development, Karen Women Organisation, Tenessarim Rivers Indigenous People Network</p> | <p>Sustainable Transformation of Agriculture, Nutrition and Development for Uplands (STAND UP)</p> <p>The project works with eight local organisations for communities living in conflict-affected areas of Kayin State and Mon State to improve their livelihoods and food security. While focusing on activities directly supporting agriculture, land tenure security, water and sanitation, and nutrition in these areas, the project also provides technical assistance to improve policy and governance there.</p> <p>In August 2019, the project developed a position paper on land tenure restitution for displaced communities. Based on the paper, the project also conducted a series of briefings to targeted groups and a public meeting in Yangon during the same month.</p> <p>Then, the above mentioned events in Yangon were followed by a historic high level meeting between the Myanmar Forest Department and KNU's Forest Department in Nay Pyi Taw on 30 August 2019 with project's facilitation. That was the first meeting between the two parties and it was constructive. The meeting discussions included customary land tenure, community forestry, biodiversity conservation and the rights of indigenous communities to free, prior and informed consent. During the reporting period, the project also provided technical assistance to strengthen administration capacity of KNU's Agriculture Department for their land policy implementation in KNU-controlled areas.</p> |

Decent Work and Labour Mobility

Policy Issue: Media discourse and social dialogues contributing decent work and migration policy advocacy

LIFT IP: BBC Media Action

Collaborators: MRTV, MAP Radio, 9 media partners from 7 different states and regions and 1 media partner from Mae Sot, Thailand.

Yay Kyi Yar: Decent Work and Labour Migration for Media

Starting from April 2019, the *Yay Kyi Yar* project has been extended to include an additional component for supporting a more informed media discourse on labour migration within Myanmar and increased social dialogue between key stakeholders including government, employers, trade unions and migrants – on labour migration governance and decent work initiatives. During the reporting period, the project recruited human resources to work on that component.

To support more informed media discourse and increased social dialogue on labour migration and decent work issues, *Yay Kyi Yar* will produce a series of media outputs for broadcast on television and social media to national audiences. A series of *Yay Kyi Yar* televised panel debates/ discussions will be produced to bring together key stakeholders such as migrants, government, unions, recruitment agencies, employers and civil society to debate and discuss issues, approaches and solutions for decent works and labour migration challenges across key work sectors in Myanmar and the ASEAN region. These debates will provide opportunities for migrants and workers to have their voices heard and ensure space for the participation of groups that might otherwise be excluded, e.g. female migrant workers, so that their experiences and the issues that matter to them are heard.

The project also conducted a formative research that identified 11 key theme areas and discussion topics. The 11 key themes are - Rights of Domestic Workers, Discrimination at Workplace, Health & Safety at Workplace, Resolving Labour Disputes, Child Labour, Labor Unions, Social Security Cards, Skill Development & Training Opportunities, MOU system, Discrimination at Workplace and Issues of Cross-border Fishermen. The project has also designed a unique format of *Yay Kyi Yar* TV programme which is a mix of storytelling and discussion. In 2019, the project recorded 6 discussion shows in Ayeyarwaddy, Magway, Mandalay, Bago and Yangon Regions and Kayin State.

The project also published online contents in Burmese on its *Yay Kyi Yar* Facebook page. These posts were designed to promote and complement its TV discussion shows and also to provide stand-alone content targeting online audiences. These online contents were focused on both labour migration and decent work.

To create increased opportunities for more balanced and inclusive dialogue among labour migration stakeholders, the project plans to produce TV dialogues/discussions in 2020. The project has scheduled recording of two discussion episodes– one related to “Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)” and the other on “Labour Disputes” for February, one discussion episode on “Health and Safety at work” in March and two discussion episodes - one on “Social Security card” and the other on “Fishery” in May 2020.

Policy Issue: Policy and legal framework development for internal and external migration

LIFT IP: International Labour Organisation

Collaborators: Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population

Developing International and Internal Labour Migration Governance

The project aims to improve policies and legislations on safe migration. In 2019, some progress made:

2nd National Plan of Action (2018-2023) development

The project provided technical support to the government and other stakeholders to develop the 2nd National Plan on Labour Migration (2018-2023) and ensured participation of labour organisations and civil societies in the development process. Hence, the Plan paid greater attention to migrant rights and policy and practices to protect migrants from exploitation and abuse. MOLIP launched the 2nd Five Year National Plan of Action on the Management of International Labour Migration (2018 – 2022) on May 11th 2019 and formed a Technical Working Group. Two project personnel served as official members of the Group.

Legal Protection of Domestic Workers

The project supported the development of a Working Group on Legal Protection of Domestic Workers. The Working Group conducted a public opinion pools towards legal protection of domestic workers and a legal gap analysis of labour protection of domestic workers between Myanmar laws and ILO Convention 189, ILO Recommendation 201 and labour laws from other countries. The legal gap analysis provided critical technical inputs for the development of a law while the findings of the public opinion poll showed general support for a legal framework to protect domestic workers. The legal gap analyses were launched in Yangon and Mandalay in September and October 2019 to multi stakeholder participants to increase the informed support for the development of a bill. The project distributed the analyses and public opinion poll findings to policy makers and other stakeholders at the launches and through other public events.

In 2019, the project conducted a series of targeted consultations with the Women and Peace Members of Parliament Group for their support on findings from the legal gap analysis and public opinion pool. The Group included members of parliaments from the Amyotha Hluttaw and the Pyithu Hluttaw. The project also provided technical support to the Group for the development of bill on protection of domestic workers. Accordingly, the bill on the protection of domestic workers has been drafted and is under review of parliamentary committees.

The project also worked for legal protection of domestic workers who were banned to work abroad. The project has been advocating for the ban to be lifted and the protection of domestic workers to be strengthened through outreach activities including the annual public campaign, event for International Domestic Workers Day (which received very wide media coverage) and small consultations with policy makers. Accordingly, the Education, Health and Human Resources Deployment Committee (the Cabinet) lifted the ban on domestic workers going to work overseas on March 5, 2019. The Committee agreed to allow The Myanmar Overseas Employment Agencies Federation to send domestic workers to Hong Kong (China), Macau (China), Singapore and Thailand.

Policy Issue: Anti-sexual harassment in the workplace

LIFT IP: Care International

Collaborators: Busines Kind Myanmar, Legal Clinic Myanmar and Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population

Aung Myin Hmu Project - Industry Solutions for Safe Employment

A workplace without sexual harassment is an integral part of safe employment so Aung Myin Hmu project put anti-sexual harassment at the centre of its policy advocacy efforts. Building up on the policy documents drafted in the previous year, the project finalized the workplace level anti-sexual harassment model policy and implementation mechanism at the consultation workshop in March 2019, together with workers' representatives and management personnel from 10 garment factories.

Since July 2019, the project has been engaging in the workplace level anti-sexual harassment model policy package implementation activities in garment factories. The project started Training of Trainers on prevention and responding of sexual harassment in the workplace, for human resources and compliance managers, Workplace Anti-Sexual Harassment Committee members and Workplace Coordinating Committee members in garment factories. The training participants will handle sexual harassment-related complaints and conduct subsequent awareness raising trainings in their factories.

The project also started factory level campaigns in September 19 and completed four garment factories in December 2019. Its purpose is to raise awareness about sexual harassment and sensitize workers and staffs about the policy, implementation mechanism and training they will receive soon in their factories.

Together with Fair Wear Foundation, Gender Equality Network and APHEDA, the project proposed 10 changes related to gender sensitivity and sexual harassment provision in the Occupational Safety and Health Law through advocating with members of parliament from both Amyotha Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw. Due to the collective effort, 5 out of 10 proposed changes were included in the final Occupation Safety and Health Law.

Project personnel and partners advocated with government delegates to vote for the ILO Convention 190 (prevention of violence and harassment in the world of work) before and during the June 2019 International Labour Conference. From Myanmar, all government, employer and worker delegates voted for convention and government and worker delegates voted for recommendation at the conference. The new ILO Convention on Violence and Harassment in the World of Work was adopted as international standard since it was overwhelmingly voted at the conference. The project plans to advocate with the government and key stakeholders for the ratification of ILO Convention 190 in 2020.

When the Prevention of Violence Against Women Law was being drafted by the Department of Social Welfare in 2019 in collaboration with CSOs and NGOs and other government bodies, the project provided key messages related to anti-sexual harassment in the workplace that should be included in the law to state/regional level DSW and via GEN to central level DSW. The draft law has recently released on state-owned newspapers, starting from January 25, 2020. The project team and partners will learn the draft law and provide suggestions again through different possible channels.

The project provided technical and coordination support to the National Skills Standards Authority and garment industry to develop the National Occupational Competency Standards (NOCS). However, the issue is garment factories do not value the NOCS because outdated methodology is tested in the sewing machine operator NOCS, and there is also a lack of trust in the assessment procedures.

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| <p>Policy Issue: Skill development and employment in Rakhine State</p> <p>LIFT IP: International Labour Organisation (ILO)</p> <p>Collaborators: DOL, DRD, NGOs, CSOs</p> | <p>Skills Development Project - Rakhine State</p> <p>The Skill Development Project seeks to support the Rakhine State Government in development of a comprehensive TVET strategy and non-discriminatory and inclusive plan on employment, training and skills, based on the objectives of the Rakhine State Five Year Development Plan and recommendations of the Rakhine Advisory Commission in TVET aspects. These developments require a labour market assessment to determine priorities and needs for skills development and training and to assess legal and social barriers. These also call for a gender analysis study to understand the barriers and opportunities for economic empowerment of women in Rakhine State. During the reporting period, the Project successfully completed the Labour Market Assessment and the Gender Analysis Study.</p> <p>Both the Labour Market Assessment and the Gender Analysis Study are critical inputs to further project activities including formalization of partnerships with local organisations to implement training needs assessments and establishment of physical centers for technical skills trainings. Taking these inputs, the project expanded its partnership with Department of Labour, Department of Rural Development, and private businesses in Rakhine State. These engagements played a pivotal role in setting up the first government recognized skills assessment center in Rakhine State.</p> <p>The Project also established the Rakhine State TVET Technical Coordination Group (TCG) previous year. The TCG, co-chaired by ILO and GIZ, is the local coordinating body initially consisting of INGOs and UN Agencies involved in TVET and employment related initiatives. While such initiatives are uncoordinated and scattered across government agencies and non-government organisations, the TCG serves as a coordinated mechanism for resource allocation in technical skills development in Rakhine State as the project implementation progresses. A significant achievement in 2019 is the project was able to officially include local representation in TCG by receiving six local organisations as TCG members. These local organisations will participate and support the implementation of the various community driven training, employment and social cohesion activities to be more effective in Rakhine State. The TCG had organised three fruitful coordination meetings and successfully conducted a job fair in Sittwe during 2019.</p> <p>In July 2019, the ILO actively participated in the review of the draft New Occupational Skills Development Law organised by the Department of Labour in Yangon. Most of the earlier comments and recommendations of the ILO were incorporated into the version presented to the audience.</p> <p>The draft law allows the creation of a regional National Skills Standards Authority that regulates training and assessment, and provisions that encourage the engagement with the private sector. Hence, the law will help address the fragmented skills training programs and other regions, and the weak investment of the private sector in skills development in Rakhine State.</p> |
| <p>Financial Inclusion</p> <p>Policy Issue: Saving mobilisation in rural Myanmar</p> <p>LIFT IP: Yoma Bank</p> | <p>Yoma Bank Agribusiness Finance Program (AFP)</p> <p>The AFP project with Yoma Bank was extended into 2019 to work on the remaining component of mobilising savings amongst rural smallholders through the introduction of Individual Development Accounts (IDA). The other two components of 1) stimulating investment in agricultural mechanisation and 2) increased access to finance for players in agricultural value chains had been completed in 2018.</p> <p>To reach as many people using IDA as possible, a digital infrastructure must be there. However, Yoma Bank did not have the requisite infrastructure in place so the project is required to support infrastructure development while providing incentives to rural smallholders for on boarding and rewarding savings behaviour. Not all digital components would be in place in time to roll out the full-scale implementation before mid-2020. Hence, in 2019, the project conducted two pilots which worked on a partially digital basis, with branch staff going into the rural areas to sign up individuals and connect them to the bank's digital product suite (SMART accounts).</p> <p>During the reporting period, the two pilots resulted in 2,435 IDA beneficiaries being signed up for SMART accounts and a total of MMK 298 million of LIFT money disbursed. The pilots also provided invaluable lessons learned from a product, operations, and technical perspective. These inputs are used in designing full-scale implementation of IDA approach.</p> |

| Nutrition | |
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| <p>Policy Issue: National policy advocacy on improved nutrition</p> <p>LIFT IP: Save the Children International</p> <p>Collaborators: NNC, NGOs, state and regional governments</p> | <p>Leveraging Essential Nutrition Actions to Reduce Malnutrition II (LEARN II) Project hosted the Secretariat for the Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Alliance (SUN CSA). Through the SUN CSA, LEARN II is furthering LIFT's efforts to develop a strong civil society constituency as well as to support LIFT's advocacy on food and nutrition policies and programmes at national and regional levels.</p> <p>In 2019, the SUN CSA significantly contributed to Multi-sectoral National Plan of Action for Nutrition (MS-NPAN) sub-national planning process. The SUN CSA actively participated in the MS-NPAN sub national consultative workshops in July and September in Ayeyarwady Region and in November in Kayah State. To ensure effective implementation at sub-national level, the workshops produced prioritized interventions to meet specific needs of a specific state/region.</p> <p>During the reporting period, SUN CSA has worked with its member organisations to develop SUN CSA's MS-NPAN engagement roadmap at sub-national level. First, SUN CSA members' capacity and their engagement status for the implementation of MS-NPAN in term of their geographic coverage and programmatic coverage were identified and assessed. Then the roadmap for the next three year was discussed and developed at the "Verification workshop on assessment of SUN CSA members in engaging MS-NPAN and Multi-Sectoral National Plan of Action on Nutrition (MS-NPAN) awareness raising" on October 16.</p> <p>In 2019, SUN CSA had successfully arranged an exchange visit for its member organisations to foster cross learning, experience sharing, and coordination practices in planning and implementing nutrition activities. LEARN and SUN CSA also actively participated in Nutrition Promotion Month activities in Taunggyi and Yangon.</p> |
| <p>Policy Issue: MCCT for 1000 Days Window</p> <p>LIFT IP: DSW with SBCC partners of Team MCCT (Save the Children International, IRC, DRC and MRCS)</p> <p>Collaborators: DOPH, NNC, HLP, GAD and UNICEF</p> | <p>Maternal and Child Cash Transfer Programme in Chin State</p> <p>The MCCT in Chin State is the first ever LIFT funded programme with direct government implementation. It is also the first ever implementation of the first flagship programme out of a total of eight programmes in the National Social Protection Strategic Plan, which was endorsed by the union government in end of 2014. The programme delivered its first round of cash transfer payment in October 2017 with universal coverage to pregnant women and lactating mothers of children under two years in Chin State. It focused on improved nutrition of all children in their first 1,000 days since conception.</p> <p>LIFT had funded Cash Transfer Grant and Operational Grant the MCCT Programme, initially started in Chin State, from June 2017 to September 2019. Starting with 8,515 registered beneficiaries in the 1st round of bimonthly cash transfer payment of MMK 30,000 per each beneficiary for June-July 2017, the number of registered beneficiaries was increased to 33,918 in the 14th and final round of the payment (with LIFT's grant) for August-September 2019.</p> <p>In February 2019, the programme conducted the third round of Post Distribution Monitoring Survey (PDM Survey) which analysed responses from 437 beneficiaries from the sample. When the respondents were asked if they think MCCT cash transfer is enough to cover nutritious food for them and their children, 12% answered that it was sufficient for nutritious food for them and their children whilst 64% replied it covered most of nutritious food needs, and 20% informed that it covered some. Only 3% said that it is not sufficient to cover for nutritious food for them and their children. Hence, the programme turned out to achieve its 1,000 days nutrition goal.</p> <p>Then, LIFT has been funding operational expenses alone of extended MCCT programme in Kayin and Kayah States since February 2019.</p> <p>Technical Assistance to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement's Chin Maternal and Child Cash Transfer Programme (TEAM MCCT)</p> <p>The Save the Children-led TEAM MCCT project provided technical assistance to the DSW-led MCCT Programme in Chin State to formulate and implement 1) SBCC activities and 2) the monitoring and learning mechanism .</p> <p>The project worked with DOPH and DSW in formulating SBCC Strategy and Action Plan in 2018 and then organised the SBCC strategy review workshop to assist the departments to revise it in July 2019. The revised SBCC Strategy and Action Plan guide the delivery of nutrition, health, and hygiene activities by Basic Health Staff auxiliary midwives and community health workers to local communities including MCCT beneficiaries, key community influencers and leaders in Chin State. These documents were recognized by key stakeholders at the workshop as a good model for replication especially for Kayin and Kayin State MCCT plans. The revised SBCC Strategy and Action Plan were then submitted to the MOHS and MSWRR for approval and finally approved and released by both union ministries in January 2020.</p> <p>The project team participated MS-NPAN Sub-national Planning Workshop as a key representation organisation for Chin State in November 2019. The project also co-facilitated the Chin MS-NPAN Workshop in December 2019. The first draft MS-NPAN Action Plan for Chin State was documented at the workshop for finalization of the National Nutrition Centre later.</p> |

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| | <p>The project also developed a joint monitoring mechanism with DSW to support DSW Case Managers in monitoring the DSW's MCCT project by providing or supporting verification, learning/adaptation, and capacity development. This mechanism identifies and addresses implementation issues faced by DSW.</p> <p>In 2019, the project completed the final and fourth round of project monitoring, using the different survey tools designed to gather data with all the key stakeholders. The project handed over these tools to DSW in July 2019. DSW led the PDM review workshop in Sep 2019 and shared the tools with other states and regions for their application of the tools. The project also shared the learning points and experiences in the workshop.</p> |
| <p>Policy Issue: Rice fortification</p> <p>LIFT IP: PATH</p> <p>Collaborators: Population Services International Myanmar, University of Washington, Evans School of Public Policy and Governance World Food Programme, NNC, FDA</p> | <p>Introduction of Fortified Rice in Myanmar Project developed an unprecedented rice fortification policy in Myanmar as a means to reduce micronutrient deficiencies.</p> <p>The project provided technical support in finalizing the Technical Guidance on Rice Fortification of MOHS. The guidance was approved by the Minister in November 2018 and launched by the ministry to private sector actors in March 2019. The MOHS has also mandated the intra-ministerial order to begin using fortified rice at nursing and midwifery schools across the country.</p> <p>The project worked with the University of Washington to integrate gender analysis in the policy implication analysis for the National Rice Fortification Policy. This was to ensure a gender-sensitive National Rice Fortification Policy tackling all forms of malnutrition in mothers, children, and adolescent girls.</p> <p>In 2019, the project continued to advocate for the MOHS to adopt the draft National Rice Fortification Policy. The draft of the National Rice Fortification Policy was completed with technical assistance from the project and approved by the Rice Fortification Working Group in 2018. The draft policy is waiting for the union minister's endorsement.</p> <p>In October 2019, the project organised a lessons learned workshop, as well as a workshop on policy development for scaling up rice fortification, with participants from public, social, and private sectors. During the workshop, PATH handed over the project, which it has implemented for six years, to the National Nutrition Centre, along with the Food and Drug Administration, both under DOPH, MOHS. The Deputy Director General of the DOPH gave his commitment to continuing rice fortification in Myanmar. The project also produced fortified rice lessons learned document. The document identifies challenges and successes the project faced, as well as how best to continue rice fortification going forward. The document is expected to be disseminated nationally and internationally in 2020.</p> <p>PATH advocated with the National Nutrition Centre and Myanmar Rice Federation to establish the coordination and communication of public-private partnership in rice fortification. In November 2019, PATH facilitated their first partnership meeting to initiate communication and coordination for rice fortification.</p> <p>The project also provided technical assistance and advocate for fortified rice to be included in the prioritized interventions at the subnational level in alignment with the inception phase of the MS-NPAN. PATH supported the National Nutrition Centre in developing the synopsis of fortified rice with up-to-date achievements and the recommendation of policy options to submit to the National Nutrition Promotion Steering Committee, chaired by MOHS. As a result, the union minister and social ministers of states and regions directed use of fortified rice in the interventions, to be implemented under the subnational level MS-NPAN.</p> |
| Others (cross-cutting) | |
| <p>Policy Issue: Disability inclusive rural development</p> <p>LIFT IP: LODESTAR COMPANY LTD./ SPPRG</p> <p>Collaborators: Department of Rural Development, Sagaing Regional Government, Department of Rehabilitation</p> | <p>Inclusive Development by enabling Existing Actors (IDEA)</p> <p>The IDEA project looks into simultaneously building and evaluating two comparative models and capacity building of existing actors to enable inclusion of disable people in rural community-based development. It employs an action research on ongoing project work in Sagaing Region and outcomes for learning. Working in partnership with DRD, the project aims to produce working, costed models that provide a clear template applicable elsewhere by both government and non-government actors.</p> <p>One model is built up on 10 villages where government-lead rural development programmes (mainly Mya Sein Yaung Programme implemented by DRD) exist. Another model is constructed on ten villages with no presence of government-led rural development programmes.</p> <p>In 2019, the project collaborated with DRD to build the capacity of DRD staff at sub-national levels for inclusion (of disable people in social, economic and productive life of their village) and overcoming institutional barriers to do so. The project also built the capacity of village committees such as Mya Sein Yaung Committee for inclusion. In some of non-Mya Sein Yaung villages with no village committee presence, the project established new committees. Starting from the 2nd half of 2019, the project formed Self Help Groups for persons with disabilities (PwDs) and their families have been in each project village. The project also collected group members' base-line data including each person's degree of inclusion, type of disability and barriers to realize his/her dreams. A Self Help Group is structured as a sub-committee of the village committee and stays in close contact to assure that inclusion of PwDs at all levels of village life takes place.</p> |

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| | <p>During 2019, the project has provided seed funds to all project villages to produce income for providing social care to people in need, especially PwDs.</p> <p>In collaboration with Department of Rehabilitation, the project developed and implemented personal rehabilitation plans for PwDs. These initiatives have made some good progress in giving social care such as physiotherapy treatments, fly-proof latrines (commode chairs) and assistive devices already provided to PwDs in need.</p> <p>One ambition of this project in working closely with DRD is to include PwDs in DRD activities for sustainability. The project finds that some of the DRD staff have already internalised disability awareness and are able to adapt it in their rural infrastructure work. During the reporting period, DRD has adapted the design of the three community halls with PwDs' access in the project area so with their Mya Sein Young fund, DRD will build future community halls having PwDs' access.</p> <p>The project conducted mid-term review and learning workshops with DRD and community representatives in October 2019. The project also produced a study paper titled <i>Trading places: a Gendered Assessment of Barriers to Livelihood for People with Disabilities in Rural Myanmar</i>. The paper presents project findings, conclusions and recommendations.</p> |
| <p>Policy Issue: Community-based social protection and inclusion</p> <p>LIFT IP: HelpAge International</p> <p>Collaborators: Disabled People's Development Organisation, Karen Baptist Convention, DSW, regional governments</p> | <p>Inclusive Social Protection and Livelihoods in Magway Region and Kayin State Project</p> <p>This project combines two LIFT-funded projects: Dry Zone Social Protection Project and Inclusive Social Protection and Livelihoods Project. It provides social protection services, via Inclusive Self-Help Groups (ISHGs) and Inclusive Village Development Committees (VDCs), to vulnerable rural households with a focus on their inclusion in community-based development.</p> <p>In collaboration with DSW and GAD, the project tests the electronic cash transfer pilot intervention through mobile phone technology, with potential for nationwide replication by the government. The pilot is in line with the DSW's plan to administer 40% of social pensions electronically by 2023. The project also tests ISHG model by establishing ISHG - a modification of the Older Person Self-Help Groups. Older Person Self-Help Group is adopted by the government in the 2014 National Social Protection Strategic Plan. The Group comprises exclusively older people. VDC-another form of group established by the project- is actually the Older Person Self-Help Group while ISHGs include other community members such as pregnant women, female household heads and disable people as well, in addition to older people. ISHGs are inclusive membership-based organisations, led and managed by those who are traditionally excluded from community-based development activities.</p> <p>In 2019, the ISHG model proved successful in promoting the decision making of older women, female headed households, and people with disabilities, as well as in ensuring that social protection mechanisms are led by and reach people who need the most. Accordingly, ISHGs were adopted by the MSWRR as a part of its Costed Social Protection Sector Plan (2018-2020), which targets to establish 800 ISHGs in Myanmar by 2023. The project continued to learn and reflect on this model through reforming VDCs to include at least two people with disabilities (one woman, one man) on their committees, and continuing to work with 80 ISHGs. The project drafted guidelines to support the nationwide replication of ISHGs, which will be finalized in 2020. It also shared learnings on the mechanics of ISHGs with the MSWRR on an ongoing basis.</p> |
| <p>Policy Issue: Gender equality and women empowerment</p> <p>LIFT IP: GEN</p> <p>Collaborators: CSOs, NGOs, government ministries</p> | <p>Deepening Commitment to Gender Equality in Myanmar</p> <p>The project seeks to promote gender equality and women empowerment in Myanmar. Being a member of Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs, which is a high-level inter-ministerial committee, GEN involved in the committee's National Strategic Plan for Advancement of Women 2013-2022 (NSPAW) implementation and Prevention and Protection from Violence Against Women (PoVAW) Law development process by actively participating in the committee's four technical working groups (TWGs).</p> <p>In 2019, GEN took the role of co-chair in two out of the four TWGs: 1) Gender Mainstreaming and 2) Violence Against Women & Girls. Hence, GEN facilitated both TWGs' national work plan development for implementation of the NSPAW. Moreover, GEN also proposed to serve the NGO co-facilitator role at the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Development Partners Group, which provides technical inputs to Myanmar National Committee for Women and to the Development Assistance Coordination Unit, to promote gender equality in Myanmar.</p> <p>In 2019, the project continued to provide technical support on analyzing strategic plans and legislations. It undertook NSPAW implementation analysis which focused on the VAW TWG work plan and implementation. That was a comparative analysis of other countries with recommendations for strengthening the NSPAW implementation. The project would also provide technical suggestions on the latest draft of POVAW Law, responding the request from MSWRR before the ministry's submission of the draft law to the cabinet.</p> |

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| | <p>The project also conducted gender analysis on labour laws using the gender perspective in line with international and legal framework. The findings will be used to advocate with the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population in 2020. Being GEN as a co-chair of the working group for legal protection of domestic workers, the project advocated with women parliamentarians in Nay Pyi Taw to discuss about the legal gap analysis related to the domestic workers and a need to develop a new law for protection of domestic workers.</p> <p>During the reporting period, the project initiated advocacy with five union ministries for gender equality and gender mainstreaming in their scope of work. This involves advocacy with Ministry of Information to mainstream gender in the state-owned media and in dissemination of information related to gender issues and Ministry of Home Affairs on gender-based violence situation and response in Myanmar.</p> <p>In 2019, the project organised events and awareness raising campaigns to increase both the public and government awareness on gender-based violence. The project organised and participated in different events and campaigns (e.g. International Women Day 2019 events and Decent Work campaigns) through different channels (e.g. social media and social influencers).</p> |
| <p>Policy Issue: Social pension for the elderly</p> <p>LIFT IP: HelpAge International</p> <p>Collaborators: DSW, regional governments</p> | <p>Strengthening the Ministry of Social Welfare to Fulfil its Role in Expanding Social Protection</p> <p>This project empowers the MSWRR to achieve sound policy outcomes with effective public expenditure in social protection for the vulnerable. In term of social protection for elderly people, the project's technical support has significantly contributed to development of the national social pension programme started in April 2017 and then the programme's expansion to cover older people more, by reducing eligible age and increasing national government budget expenditure over time.</p> <p>The government has reduced eligible age for the National Social Pension from 90 to 85 since October 2018. This has expanded the coverage of the universal national social pension thereby increasing beneficiary numbers from 40,872 in end of 2017 to 168,578 in end of 2018 and 197,593 in end of 2019. To cope with an accelerated expansion of service, the ministry has set up and executed a new Social Protection Division and the project technically has contributed to the division's rapid development with on-going technical advice, systems improvement, database improvement, staff training and information material development and production.</p> <p>During the reporting period, the project supported DSW's national workshop in September 2019. DSW held the workshop with its senior officers from all states and regions to create a heightened understanding of DSW's decentralisation objectives, prospects and challenges. The presentations and deliberations were based on the key findings of the project study on Roles and Responsibilities of Social Protection in Myanmar: the Cost of Social Pensions Focusing on Union and Sub-National Structures. DSW had only 12 district office and no township office in early 2018 but it had 45 district offices and 106 township offices in end of 2019. Due to this rapid institutional expansion, the Department will be benefited from effective decentralization functions it is practicing.</p> <p>In early 2019, MSWRR's Costed Social Protection Sector Plan (2018-2020) that the project provided technical inputs was accepted by the Development Assistance Coordination Unit. The plan includes a more specific action plan and growth trajectory for all the eight social protection flagship programmes than the National Social Protection Strategic Plan does. As the project previously contributed to include both Social Pension and Inclusive Self-Help Group as two out of eight flagship programmes, DSW requested the project's assistance in drafting a national social assistance law to reinforce these policy foundations with a stronger legal basis. The law will cover all cash transfers in the Costed Social Protection Sector Plan (2018-2020) and allow for future new cash transfers. The project will do this work in 2010.</p> <p>In 2019, the project completed an analysis of the relationship between social protection and national cohesion and reconciliation in Myanmar, to explore how social protection can further the government's aims related to national reconciliation and peace. It has also done the study on the national investigation of social pension delivery challenges, to help DSW improve ward, village tract and village level social pension operations and reduce exclusion error. In addition, the project has conducted the study on the Roles and Responsibilities of Social Protection in Myanmar: the Case of Social Pension, to Assess the Rapidly Transforming Roles and Responsibilities of DSW in Introducing Social Protection Services.</p> |



Livelihoods and Food Security Fund

UNOPS

No. 12(O), Pyithu Lane,

7 Mile, Mayangone Township,

Yangon, Myanmar

+95 1 657 278, 657 280-7, 657 703-4

Email: lift@unops.org

www.facebook.com/liftfund