

**Opening Remarks delivered by  
H.E. U Khin Maung Aye, Union Deputy Minister for  
Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development  
on the occasion of Village Development Planning Workshop**

**9 June 2015, Nay Pyi Taw**

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning.

It is a great privilege and pleasure to extend my heartfelt greetings and cordial welcome to LIFT Fund Board Director Mr Andrew Kirkwood, Director Generals, responsible personnel from various departments, and all the distinguished guests participating in this auspicious event. Please accept my sincere best wishes for your physical and mental wellbeing and prosperity in all aspects.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In the past, District Councils were set up and local self-government act was promulgated to maintain sound administration in rural areas in 1921 in order to operate rural development interventions. After successive changes in the systems of administrative mechanism under various government rulings, the existing new government came into existence. Then, integrated rural development programmes were being made to narrow down the gap between the urban and rural area.

Since 70 per cent of the country dwellers reside in the rural area of the country, emphasis on the improvement of the socio-economic life of these people has to be made. Then only, it may fully meet the national target of poverty reduction. The Ministry of Livestock, Fishery and Rural Development is the focal ministry for rural development in Myanmar.

Measures on the implementation of food security and food safety in the meat and fishery production and sustainable rural development have been made. Moreover, in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals, concerted efforts on rural development and poverty reduction are being made to reduce poverty incidence to 16 per cent by the year-end 2015, through setting up central committee and working committees at various levels on 8 thematic sectors to manage and supervise implementation. Our ministry takes the role of secretary in central and working committees.

In addition, the ministry with the cooperation of the national and international development partners has developed inclusive and sustainable Rural Development Strategic Framework. The ministry's Department of Rural Development (DRD) has initiated a programme of "socialisation" of the RDSF through a series of "appreciation workshop" to inform and seek feedback of government agencies at all levels on the RDSF.

The Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, in collaboration with the LIFT fund, is striving to develop help village communities in developing their respective village development plan through participation of the villagers so as to capture the real needs of the rural people. The Village Development Plans are being developed based on the views, ideas and inspirations of the village people aimed at eliminating poverty and vulnerability. Village Development Plan can also support in the development of projects along with possible financial options.

In the first phase, village development planning will be conducted in 34 townships of states and regions along with the Nay Pyi Taw Council Territory. As a pilot test, village development planning has been conducted in two villages - Le Lu Ai and Nyaung Pin Thar.

The experience from these two villages will be shared in this workshop and suggestions from all departments from various ministries are carefully noted for improving the process in the coming sessions to be done in states and regions. In carrying out the village development planning and community empowerment process, the government and LIFT fund will provide technical and financial support.

Being an ambitious project that requires integrated and multi-sectoral interventions, the ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development alone cannot do it. Rather, all stakeholders such as concerned ministries at union, state and region levels, International Non-government Organizations, Local Non-government Organizations and civil society organizations, need to collaborate.

In conclusion, I would like to request representatives of the various ministries and departments, LIFT funded Technical Assistance Team and village representatives to share your experience, difficulties, challenges, opportunities and barriers in an open and frank manner. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to Mr Andrew Kirkwood and his team members for providing supports to make this workshop a success.

Thank you.