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GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR

**Formulation and Operationalization of National Action
Plan for Poverty Alleviation and Rural Development through
Agriculture (NAPA)**

Working Paper - 8

RURAL EMPLOYMENT

Yangon, June 2016

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ACRONYMS

ARD	Agriculture and Rural Development
CDZ	Central Dry Zone
DRE	Decent Rural Employment
DRD	Department of Rural Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GiZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
IHLCA	Integrated Household Living Conditions Assessment
JFFLS	Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools
ILO	International Labour Organization
LIFT	Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFI	Micro Finance Institutions
MIMU	Myanmar Information Management Unit
MoAI	Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation
MoLFRD	Ministry of Livestock, Forestry and Rural Development
MoSWRS	Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Settlement
MSME	Micro and Small and Medium Enterprises
MTU	Mobile Training Unit
NAPA	National Action Plan for Poverty Alleviation through Agriculture
NSPARD	National Strategy on Poverty Alleviation and Rural Development
NWFP	Non-wood Forest Product
NGO	Non-government Organization
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
TBD	To Be Determined
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
WFP	World Food Programme

INTRODUCTION

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is assisting the Government of Myanmar in the formulation of a National Action Plan for Agriculture (NAPA) to address poverty alleviation. This plan will provide guidance to the implementation of the National Strategy on Poverty Alleviation and Rural Development (NSPARD). In this context, a technical study on decent rural employment was carried out to support the formulation of the NAPA, with a field mission between 1 and 19 December 2014. The mission team comprised Dr Ohnmar Myo Aung, National Consultant and Maria Lee, International Consultant.

The mission included visits to Mon State, Ayeyarwaddy Region, Chin State and Mandalay Region, representing the four agro-ecological zones of Myanmar.

The team met with a range of key stakeholders including representatives of government agencies related to rural development, agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry sectors, as well as development partners, NGOs, small farmers, small and medium entrepreneurs, and trainers in vocational training centres. Particular attention has been given to the situation of youth and women.

We are grateful to the NAPA team who supported the organization of the mission. Special thanks go to all the women and men – farmers and official representatives – met throughout the mission, who provided their insights and experience on the current situation and priorities to reduce poverty and promote rural employment in their respective sector or geographic area.

BACKGROUND

Myanmar is experiencing a time of great changes, with institutional reforms, market liberalization and democratic processes. A new Constitution was adopted in May 2008. This transition lays the space for great opportunities to reduce poverty and inequalities, and to promote an inclusive pattern of development. Indeed, Myanmar presents a wealth of cultural diversity, skills and natural resources and is strategically positioned between India and the People's Republic of China. However, it still has high rates of poverty, especially in rural areas. Myanmar is the poorest country in Southeast Asia, with poverty affecting around 25 percent of the total population; rural areas account for nearly 85 percent of total poverty (IHLCS 2010). Rural poverty is very much linked to households' access to land and the size of their holdings and their household composition (e.g. age, number of dependents, working age family members). For example, households' landholdings are smallest in Chin State (0.7 ha on average) which has some of the highest levels of poverty and highest average household size.

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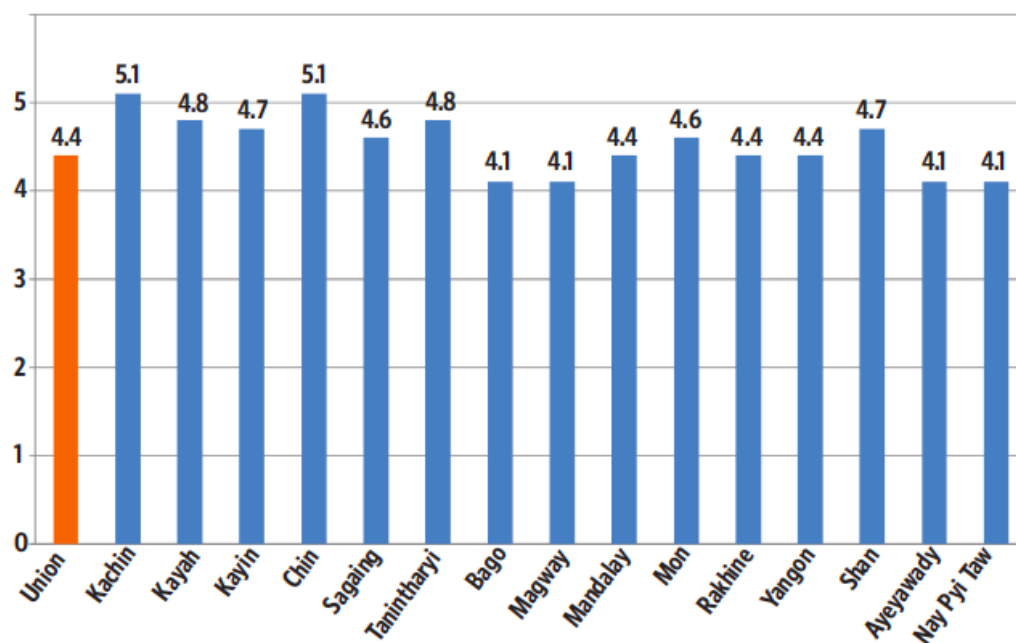


Figure 1: Average size of households by state/region (census Myanmar 2014)

Myanmar is still predominantly an agricultural and rural country. About 70 percent of its national population (51.4 million in 2014) lives in rural areas and depends on agriculture, livestock, forestry and fishery for livelihoods.

Table 1: Distribution of population by state/region and gender (Myanmar census 2014)

State/Region Name	Total population			Urban population			Rural population			Population Ratio	M/F Ratio
	Both sexes	Males	Females	Both sexes	Males	Females	Both sexes	Males	Females		
Kachin	1,643,054	854,633	788,421	590,462	296,675	293,787	1,052,592	557,958	494,634	3.20%	108
<i>Kachin *</i>	46,600	23,031	23,569							0.09%	98
Kachin (Total)	1,689,654	877,664	811,990							3.29%	108
Kayah	286,738	143,461	143,277	72,444	35,842	36,602	214,294	107,619	106,675	0.56%	100
Kayin	1,502,904	739,234	763,670	329,127	163,266	165,861	1,173,777	575,968	597,809	2.92%	97
<i>Kayin *</i>	69,753	36,141	33,612							0.14%	108
Kayin (Total)	1,572,657	775,375	797,282							3.06%	97
Chin	478,690	230,005	248,685	99,905	47,300	52,605	378,785	182,705	196,080	0.93%	92
Sagaing	5,320,299	2,518,155	2,802,144	909,478	429,654	479,824	4,410,821	2,088,501	2,322,320	10.35%	90
Tanintharyi	1,406,434	700,403	706,031	337,513	164,642	172,871	1,068,921	535,761	533,160	2.74%	99
Bago	4,863,455	2,324,214	2,539,241	1,070,346	500,845	569,501	3,793,109	1,823,369	1,969,740	9.46%	92
Magway	3,912,711	1,814,993	2,097,718	591,396	272,670	318,726	3,321,315	1,542,323	1,778,992	7.61%	87
Mandalay	6,145,588	2,919,725	3,225,863	2,137,025	1,028,779	1,108,246	4,008,563	1,890,946	2,117,617	11.95%	91
Mon	2,050,282	986,454	1,063,828	570,432	272,999	297,433	1,479,850	713,455	766,395	3.99%	93
Rakhine	2,098,963	992,906	1,106,057	354,941	167,692	187,249	1,744,022	825,214	918,808	4.08%	90
<i>Rakhine *</i>	1,090,000	536,700	553,300							2.12%	97
Rakhine (Total)	3,188,963	1,529,606	1,659,357							6.20%	92
Yangon	7,355,075	3,517,486	3,837,589	5,156,646	2,441,689	2,714,957	2,198,429	1,075,797	1,122,632	14.30%	92
Shan	5,815,384	2,908,259	2,907,125	1,394,691	692,494	702,197	4,420,693	2,215,765	2,204,928	11.31%	100
Ayeeyawady	6,175,123	3,010,195	3,164,928	873,046	413,181	459,865	5,302,077	2,597,014	2,705,063	12.01%	95
Nay Pyi Taw	1,158,367	565,181	593,186	376,667	184,377	192,290	781,700	380,804	400,896	2.25%	95
Total Union (enumerated)	50,213,067	24,225,304	25,987,763	14,864,119	7,112,105	7,752,014	35,348,948	17,113,199	18,235,749	97.65%	93
Total Union (NOT enumerated) *	1,206,353	595,872	610,481							2.35%	98
Total Union (enumerated + NOT enumerated)	51,419,420	24,821,176	26,598,244							100.00%	93

The agriculture sector as a whole employs around 70 percent of the labour force and contributes about 36 to 43 percent of the national GDP (rates vary depending on sources). Manufacturing currently accounts for 26 percent and services for 38 percent of the GDP. Supporting rural development and agriculture modernization will be crucial to reducing rural poverty and mitigating the impact of the anticipated rapid rise of migration to urban areas and depopulation of rural areas. Rural employment in particular has been recognized as one of the key strategies to reduce poverty and achieve food security (Millennium Development Goal 1) and features high in the post-2015 debates, acknowledging the centrality of employment for achieving sustainable development.

The current official unemployment rate is very low ranging from 1.4 percent for the non-poor to 2.4 percent for the poor. The rate is higher in urban areas (3.5 percent) than in rural areas (1.1 percent), presuming that people have more jobs in rural areas. However, underemployment is prevalent (38 percent of the working population), with pronounced seasonal dimensions showing the high share of casual work. There are more men (69 percent) than women (46.3 percent) employed in all sectors, which suggests that women have fewer job opportunities (data from the IHLCA survey 2009-2010). These statistics may not be fully representative of the situation in sectors like agriculture, which comprise a high proportion of unpaid family workers, informal own-account workers and small market sales workers, all considered vulnerable employment-wise. And this is typically underreported in existing surveys. The final results of the 2014 census expected in May 2015 may provide additional information.

Since 2008, Myanmar has engaged in a series of institutional reforms to reduce poverty and support rural development. In 2011, the NSPARD was developed, followed by a Rural Development Strategic Framework, which identifies job creation as one of the key areas of action. A new Labour Organization Law, enacted in October 2011 provided the basis for the establishment of labour organizations. In the year that followed, 264 workers' organizations and 13 employers' organizations were registered (ILO 2012). While it is not clear how many refer to agriculture, a list of some associations related to agriculture is provided in section 4. A series of other laws and policies is under review. A list of those relevant to rural employment is provided in Table 7.

The outcome of the ongoing land reform is critical in a country where much of the population is heavily dependent on land for subsistence. Under the existing framework, land can be owned on an individual or communal basis. The latter is common in hilly regions. In 2012, the government adopted two new laws: The Farmland Law and the Vacant, Fallow and Virgin Lands Management Law (VFVL). Under the new Farmland Law, farmers will be issued a land title/certificate, and given the right to sell and lease their land, but the government still retains ultimate ownership of all land and can rescind land if the conditions of use are not met: *farmers shall not change the originally cultivated crop with other kind of crop, without permission.* Concerns remain about the recognition of customary land rights, farmers who cultivate land currently categorized as vacant or fallow and have no formal rights (land titles are only provided to farmland) and the transparency of the process to deliver land certificates. Additionally, the expansion of foreign investments in the agriculture and agribusiness sectors increases land values and there is concern about the ability of smallholders to defend their rights.

Myanmar's experience with Cyclones Nargis and Giri has shown the linkages between poverty, environmental degradation and increased vulnerability to natural hazards and the need to provide

communities with alternative sources of household income and energy, which do not rely on the overexploitation of resources and contribute to strengthening their long-term resilience, including through access to better paid jobs and social protection. Significant soil degradation in the hilly regions and the Central Dry Zone (CDZ) would also explain low returns to agriculture and increased migration in those areas.

SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF RURAL EMPLOYMENT IN MYANMAR

Women and men's choices to engage and invest in specific economic activities and use their labour depend largely on their access and rights to land and tenure security as well as access to financial resources. This section provides a brief description of different profiles and strategies of women and men living in rural areas, keeping in mind that they are not exclusive from each other: smallholders, landless and small and medium businesses. Special consideration is given to the situation of youth.

1.1. Smallholders

Smallholders who own less than 2 ha are mainly subsistence farmers who do not produce enough to feed their families. They are considered to be as poor as the landless. While there are differences in crops grown across the regions, most cultivate rice for their own consumption, which is often not sufficient for the whole year, and pulses and beans as winter crops. Maize, considered the food of the poor, is the predominant crop in the hilly areas, together with vegetables and some fruits. Small vegetable gardens are cultivated by women close to their houses (home gardens). Farmers prepare their land by hand or with draught animals. Seasonality has an important impact on food production and food security, and migration across regions/agro-ecological zones. In particular, the lack of access to sufficient and nutritious food remains a major constraint for these smallholders, especially those living in remote villages, in hilly regions, and in the CDZ, and results in migration.

Faced with a low return from agriculture, farmers diversify their sources of income rather than farm more intensively. They engage in casual/seasonal work, which may include work in larger farms, rice mills and fish-processing units, and non-agricultural activities such as road construction, stone mining and grinding, weaving and small trade in local markets. Other sources of income include agroforestry (timber, bamboo, rattan, spices, medicinal plants, and honey) and small livestock such as chickens, goats and pigs. Some migrate in search of employment in cities or in neighbouring countries.

Smallholders who own larger plots and are more productive are engaged in commercial activities (Table 2). Rice and pulses/beans are cultivated in all regions. A more detailed description of the crops produced throughout the country is found in the crop sector report.

Table 2: Crops and livestock in the four agro-ecological zones

Delta region	Coastal regions	CDZ	Hilly regions
Rice	Rice	Oilseed	Rice/maize, vegetables/fruits
Coastal/mangrove	Fruit trees	Livestock	Timber
Fishing	Nuts		NWFPs* and medicinal plants
	Rubber		Tea/coffee, Livestock (<i>Mithun</i> cattle)

*Non-wood forest products. Source: Field mission.

While they are engaged in commercial activities, they still face low yields and high postharvest losses due in part to the lack of adequate storage and transportation, and lack of knowledge on postharvest handling practices. Mechanization is still uncommon. In terms of inputs, the use of chemical fertilizers has risen. Smallholders have no formal contractual arrangement with buyers and have low negotiating power (e.g. they have to sell at low prices because of lack of storage facilities or need for immediate cash).

They hire workers on a seasonal basis (for a few days, weeks or months) to clear land, at harvesting time, to work in large rice mills or fish/shrimp processing plants. Employers met during the field mission mentioned that hiring processes are done mainly through word of mouth and their social network. They provide food and housing to workers who come for longer periods as well as a basic wage (3000/5000 kyat¹/day or 60000 kyat/month in coastal/Delta regions) but no written contract. Many workers in the coastal and Delta regions come from the CDZ where wages are lower (2000 kyat/day). On the other hand, some employers in the coastal and Delta regions mentioned the problem of shortage of labour or workers leaving unexpectedly and the need to increase wages to retain workers.

1.2. Landless and migration

Data on the extent of landlessness vary depending on the information source. In 2012, the Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT) found landlessness to be an estimated 53 percent across the country, with special severity in the Ayeyarwaddy Delta, and lower levels in the hilly regions such as Shan and Chin states (due to the use of community land in those states). The landless have different strategies to earn money. They engage in several livelihoods such as farm labour, cottage industry, and livestock rearing (especially chickens, pigs and goats). Those who earn most of their income from farm labour are regarded as the poorest of the poor as wages for agricultural work are very low (2000-4000 kyat per day is the average daily wage).² This group constitutes about 60 percent of the total landless, namely 20-30 percent of the total rural population (LIFT 2013c).

Migration is common both within and out of Myanmar. Much of the migration happens through informal channels. Farm labourers in poorer regions such as the CDZ migrate on a seasonal basis to other regions in search of higher wages for example to the coastal and Delta areas, and are employed in farms and in processing units (rice mills, fish-processing units). The country is experiencing increased migration abroad, mainly in neighbouring countries such as Thailand (from the coastal areas, Mon State), as well as Malaysia, India and China (from the hilly border regions). It is estimated that over 3 million people from Myanmar work abroad (Ministry of Labour 2012). Women comprise 46.8 percent of immigrants. This situation creates labour shortages especially in bordering regions such as Mon and Kayin (border with Thailand), in part compensated by workers from the CDZ.

As a result, many rural families rely on remittances from parents, siblings and children. It is estimated that remittances from migrant workers represent at least 5 percent of the country's

¹ US\$1.00 = 1 164 kyat (April 2016).

² The establishment of the minimum wage is under discussion; minimum temporary wage is set at 56 000 kyat/month for the manufacturing sector.

GDP.³ Smallholders may also ‘sell’ or ‘lease’ their land to migrate and leave elders and children to take care of the land (with no incentive to produce more) or in some cases hire labour. But a majority of migrants living in Thailand indicate high willingness to return to their communities, according to a recent International Organization for Migration (IOM) report. The changes that Myanmar is experiencing hold the possibility of major shifts in the mobility patterns of its labour force in the coming decades. The government is currently developing a National Action Plan for the Management of International Labour Migration in Myanmar.

A significant number of the landless poor live in the marine and coastal areas and depend largely on small-scale fisheries and aquaculture. The sector provides livelihood to over 3 million people (1.3 million [marine], 1.4 million [inland], 0.3 million [aquaculture]), in addition to the large numbers employed in trading, transportation and processing such as drying, smoking, salting, preparation of fermented fish, fish paste and sauce products, which are particularly important for women. However, many fishers are faced with decline in fishing stocks, unstable income and high levels of indebtedness and are forced to seek employment away from their homes. While fish is an essential part of the Myanmar diet – second after rice, increasing fishing efforts is not a viable solution and alternatives need to be supported (for example though the expansion of aquaculture). These alternatives have strong potential to create rural employment opportunities.

1.3. Small and medium enterprises

Accurate data on small and medium enterprises (SME) are difficult to find, considering that most micro (<10 employees) or small-sized businesses operate in the informal sector and are not registered. A recent International Labour Organization (ILO) study estimated that the total number of SMEs may be around 2.8 million as of 2012, with some 39 000 start-ups annually. The study found that only around 8 percent of SMEs surveyed were registered with micro and trading businesses least likely to be registered. In most SMEs, both husband and wife work in the enterprise and have started with their own investment. Based on the field study’s interviews, children may be involved in the business while studying and are expected to take over the business after they graduate. Agricultural-related SMEs encountered during the field mission included rice mills, fish processing, and cottage industries to make potato chips, fish paste, bean paste, preserved fruits, cow milk production, as well as chicken/eggs and cows/*Mithun* cattle breeding. Non-agricultural SMEs included rattan, bamboo and nipa palm products, weaving and sowing.

The current definition of SME in Myanmar targets only small- and medium-sized manufacturers and does not take into account other sectors such as agriculture. This may hinder the implementation of policies and programmes to support agriculture-related SMEs, which face different challenges (such as seasonality of agriculture/fishing seasons) and require different types of support. A more specific definition will be needed to include other subsectors and characteristics. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is one of the organizations providing recommendations to the government in the design of a new policy framework for SMEs, including the opportunity to differentiate micro from small enterprises.

³<https://www.cgap.org/sites/default/files/Microfinance%20in%20Myanmar%20Sector%20Assessment.pdf>

1.4. Women

Both men and women are involved in farming and in raising animals – women usually taking care of smaller livestock and men larger animals. In situations where men migrate, women may be doing all of the farming. Men and women also engage in road construction work and seasonal migration to work in other farms or processing units (usually men in machinery and carrying bags and women in sorting, cleaning and packaging tasks). Vendors in local markets are mostly women. In fisheries, men are usually involved in catching and women in processing. More data are needed to better understand gender roles in these different subsectors. Women tend to be paid less than men for their labour (e.g. in road construction 2 000-3 000 kyat/day for women, 4 000 kyat/day for men). They usually work longer hours than men as they are in charge of household chores, fetching water and fuelwood and collecting NWFPs such as honey and medicinal plants.

Although under Myanmar law a woman is permitted to inherit property, including land, this does not guarantee that the land is registered under her name and not the name of her husband. Available statistics show that men hold more land than women.

Table 3: Landholdings – percent of the total population by gender

Year 2007/2008	Union	Urban	Rural
Male	78.8	72.9	80.9
Female	21.2	27.1	19.1

Source: FAO (2012).

Existing literature indicates that women in Myanmar have a relatively high social status compared with women in other Asian countries. They manage the family finances and engage in income-generating activities outside their homes. Traditional roles and responsibilities may vary according to geographical areas, level of urbanization and ethnicity. For example, in rural areas, girls tend to get married and have children at an early age. While the government reported that the legal age of marriage for women and men was 20 without the consent of parents, other customary rules allow marriage from 14 years' old. Levels of educational attainment are about the same for girls and boys at primary school level – about 96.3 percent at secondary school and about 42 percent in rural areas.

Women's participation in public life, governance bodies and cooperatives is very limited. Men deal with government and service providers on behalf of the family. During the field mission, in villages men spoke first until women were given the opportunity to speak. In 2013, the government launched a National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women, a 10-year roadmap to address gender challenges, especially in access to land, education, health care, jobs, credit and resources.

1.5. Youth

While some development programmes include youth in their activities (e.g. GIZ support to vocational training), no national policy or strategy focuses specifically on youth. Data on youth are very rare. The detailed results of the recent national census will be revealed around May 2015 and should provide more information. It is currently estimated that young people aged between 15-24 represent at least 16 million of the total population (about 31 percent) and

comprise 40 percent of the working age population. Agriculture is not an attractive option for the youth as it is considered hard work with little return. There are vocational training centres across the country supported by different ministries (including the Ministry of Cooperatives, Ministry of Social Welfare and Ministry of Borders Affairs) with no connection to skills in demand in the market. Skills taught include weaving and sowing, basic handicraft and food processing, basic electric and welding, furniture and lacquer-ware technology. Most graduates go back to their villages and their previous activities as they lack access to finance, and entrepreneurial skills to develop a business. Some may find jobs in small shops and garment factories in townships and cities. But there are no data or monitoring systems to understand what happens to graduates after the training.

Empirical evidence gathered during the field mission showed that youth is involved in farm work, road construction, rice mills, fish processing and potato chip and bean paste cottage industries among others. But the lack of better job opportunities, lack of interest in agriculture and low wages motivate youth to migrate to urban areas and neighbouring countries. As early as 13, some migrate to urban areas to work in shops (boys usually in tea shops), restaurants and hotels, the garment industry, domestic work and construction. They are usually in low-paid and low-skilled jobs. Migration to neighbouring countries may occur from the age of 15. An IOM study in Thailand (2013) showed that female migrants exceed their male counterparts in the 15-24-year age group.

Child (ages 10-14) participation rates in labour are estimated at 18 percent for the poor and 10 percent for the non-poor. Compulsory education up to the minimum age for employment is a critical preventive measure to child labour. Currently in Myanmar, the mandatory school age is said to be 10 years' old while the minimum age for employment is 13 years' old (Factories Act). In the framework of a five-year programme against child labour, the ILO is undertaking a survey on the status of child labour in the country with a focus on agriculture (including sugar cane) and fisheries. This survey will be the basis for selecting the sites for the implementation of three ILO pilot projects.

1.6. Education

While the national literacy rate is very high for youth (15-24 years) with little gender disparity (95.8 percent for boys and 96.3 percent for girls, [UNICEF] 2012), disparities exist from the secondary level.

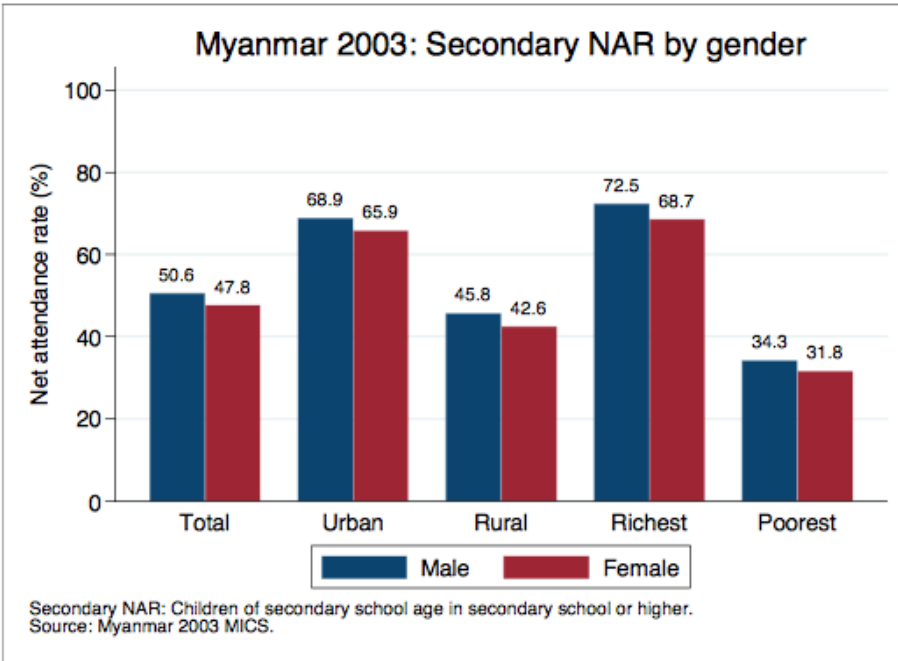


Figure 2: Secondary net attendance rate by gender

The gap is particularly important between the poorest and richest groups. While the primary enrolment is high (about 100 percent), it drops at the secondary level (average 44 percent) in rural areas. This results from a series of constraints faced by poor households in rural areas such as distance to secondary schools, the direct costs of sending children to school (such as buying books and uniforms and sometimes paying for a teacher), as well as the opportunity cost for parents who need their children's help to work. Those who cannot afford to attend state schools go to monastic schools.

1.7. Access to finance

More than 50 percent of the population has no access to financial services. Most farmers and fishers do not have the assets and collateral needed to borrow money from formal banks. The Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank provides loans to farmers who own land for the purchase of inputs (no loans for purchase of equipment). Cooperatives also provide savings and loans services to their members. However, currently, less than 20 percent of people have direct access to formal banking services. Most borrow money from family, community members, wealthy farmers or businesses, and from informal moneylenders who demand high monthly or daily interest rates. Farmers usually borrow money for agricultural inputs or to buy livestock. Fishers borrow to purchase gear or simply to buy food. Half of the farmers have outstanding debts as a result of illness, bad harvest, loss of jobs and seasonal/volatile income.

The government enacted a Microfinance Law in November 2011, which allows local and foreign investors to establish privately owned microfinance institutions (MFIs). Using group-borrowing models to mitigate lending risks, MFIs can play an important part in providing loans to the unbanked poor. However, challenges remain such as limited physical outreach and a distribution network to reach rural customers and the lack of adequate saving products offered. Currently, informal saving mechanisms are dominant in rural Myanmar with accumulation of assets such as

cash, gold and rice at home and through peer saving groups. While women also use saving and credit groups as common tools for informal savings and loans, they have little access to formal and larger loans as they have no collateral and poor financial skills. Youth face similar challenges.

INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The three ministries in charge of the crop, livestock, fishery and forestry subsectors are: the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MoAI), the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development (MoLFRD), which was created in 2013 and the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry (MoECAF).

In 2012, the NSPARD set the eight strategic priority areas of the government, i.e. development of: agricultural production, livestock and fishery production, small-scale rural industry, rural cooperatives, rural socio-economy, rural energy, environmental conservation and microcredit systems. In 2013, the government commissioned the Strategic Framework for Rural Development, which has five components: (a) targeting strategy, (b) synergistic intervention strategy, (c) sustainable financing strategy, (d) collaborative strategy and (e) good governance strategy. In order to strengthen local governance, the government has established consultation and support structures at the regional, township and village level for planning and implementing development projects (Figure 3).

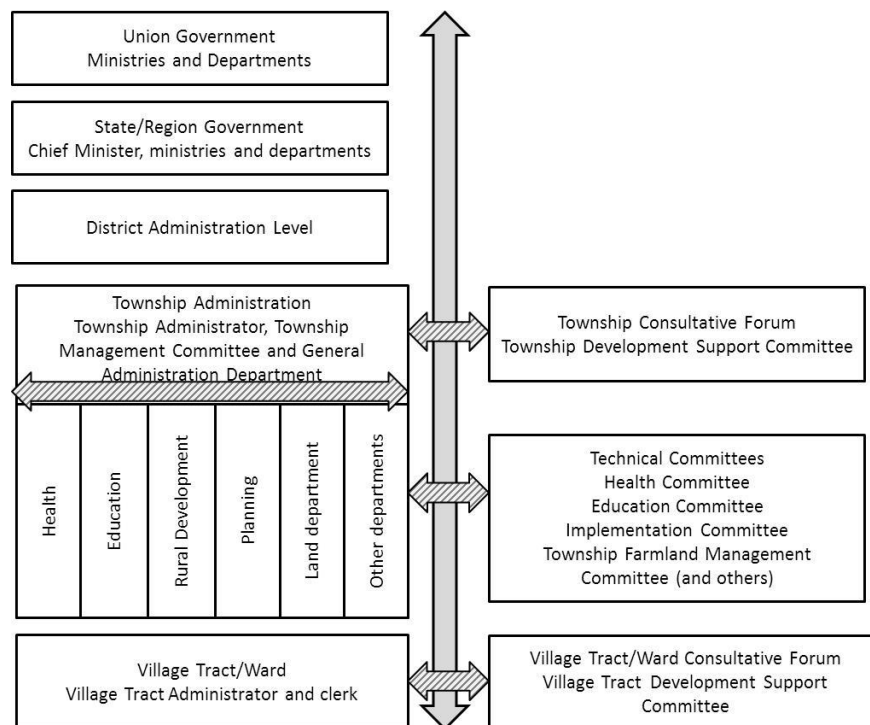


Figure 3: Consultation and support structures at the regional, township and village levels

Source: UNDP (2014).

However, interviews with local authorities at the township level show that there is still little horizontal coordination and consultation between departments of agriculture, livestock, forestry and fisheries. Departments implement centrally planned activities, with different levels of capacity and resources. There is no dialogue and coordination between these departments and the Department of Labour.

Table 4 presents some of the key challenges relevant to rural employment that need to be addressed in the different agricultural subsectors.

Table 4: Challenges by departments

Departments	Challenges
Agriculture	Extension services focus mainly on rice production and some crops cultivated on state farms; insufficient seed stock to distribute to farmers; extension services are not market-oriented and do not promote integrated farming systems (agroforestry, agrolivestock); no extension on occupational safety issues (except for pesticides) or other aspects related to working conditions of farmers and agricultural workers; shortage of water especially in the CDZ and hilly regions (high cost of irrigation systems, lack of small dams in hilly regions); shortage of labour (migration, low wages), in some cases, this leads to harvest losses; Shifting cultivation and soil erosion; no incentive for farmers to change their practices.
Fisheries	Limited staff and capacity to support fishers; weak support services (extension, credit); awareness of misuse of restricted fishing techniques (toxic mining, fishing nets); no extension on occupational safety issues and other aspects related to working conditions of fishers; lower fish stocks and lack of alternative income; cost to establish aquaculture ponds remains high for poor smallholders.
Forestry	Limited staff and capacity to support communities in agroforestry activities; focus on support to reforestation; few or no women involved in community-forest management; limited production/use of biogas for cooking (or alternative energy) to avoid collection of fuelwood.
Livestock	Limited staff and capacity; suboptimal training of Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs); extension services are not market oriented; little or no formal collaboration with the Department of Agriculture to promote integrated livestock-crop systems.

Source: Field mission.

Across the departments, it seems that top-down/ central planning prevails – even though some of the persons interviewed indicated otherwise – and the transition to a bottom-up and participatory process is still under way. It will require awareness and capacity building of department staff to shift towards a more integrated approach to livelihoods based on the needs of the rural population. This will also require space and resources to strengthen leadership and confidence among men and women to express themselves in local, regional and national governance bodies. There is much hope – but also caution – that the government will support this local empowerment process.

The Ministry of Cooperatives promotes the creation of cooperatives. For this reason, cooperatives are perceived as a state-controlled entity (even when registered as ‘private’) and there is little ownership among the members, who do not have the understanding and knowledge of cooperative principles and values. Agricultural cooperatives facilitate the purchase of inputs and equipment, and provide small loans to their members. There are very few women members in cooperatives.

Farmers’ groups (such as farmer field schools) have been established by the Department of Agriculture to receive extension services, to disseminate agricultural technologies and maintain irrigation canals. There are no data on independent farmers’ associations. There is a series of national-level producers’ associations for specific crops under the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI):

- Pulses, Beans & Sesame Seeds Merchants Association;

- Edible Oil Dealers Association;
- Myanmar Fisheries Federation;
- Livestock Federation;
- Fruit and Vegetable Producer and Exporter Association;
- Agro Based Food Processors and Exporters Association;
- Onion, Garlic and Culinary Crops Production and Exporting Association;
- Rubber Producers' Association;
- Perennial Crop Producers' Association;
- Sugarcane and Sugar Related Products Merchants and Manufactures Association;
- Oil Palm Producers Association; and
- Fish Farmers Association.

Other producer organizations include: The Myanmar Rice Federation (2012), Myanmar Food Processors and Exporters Association (under the auspices of the Ministry of Commerce), Myanmar Agribusiness Public Corporation (public limited company 2012).

Many international organizations and NGOs are engaged in Myanmar in different sectors. The Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU), a service to the UN Country Team and Humanitarian Country Team, has been collecting, processing and analysing information to improve decision-making by development organizations and donors (<http://themimu.info/place-codes>). It identified the sectors with the largest number of projects in 2014 (Figure 4). Projects in agriculture focus mainly on support to agricultural development, quality inputs, capacity building and extension.



Figure 4: Sectors with the largest number of projects in 2014

Source: MIMU (2014).

In January 2013 an aid coordination mechanism was created. There are 16 sector working groups involving the government, development partners and civil society organizations. The objective of these groups is to engage in an open dialogue and to develop strategies addressing major areas of transition. Working groups of relevance to decent rural employment include:

- ‘Agriculture & rural development sector working-group’ chaired by the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and co-chaired by FAO;
- ‘Employment opportunities sector-working group’ chaired by the Ministry of Labour and co-chaired by the ILO and GiZ;
- ‘Inter-ministerial strategic working group for the elimination of forced labour’ chaired by the Ministry of Labour, with the joint secretaries being the Deputy Minister of Labour, the Deputy Minister of Defence and the ILO Liaison Officer;
- ‘National technical working group on Child Labour’ chaired by the Ministry of Labour with the support of the ILO; and
- ‘National technical working group on social protection’ chaired by the Ministry of Social Welfare and UNICEF.

However, discussions with different development partners indicated that coordination among international organizations and NGOs remains a challenge.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS TO DECENT RURAL EMPLOYMENT

1.8. Opportunities

Myanmar is rich in natural resources and has a strategic location in the region, between India and China. The Mon State Government in southern Myanmar is planning to construct a deep-sea port to connect the country with Thailand, Lao PDR and Viet Nam. With adequate technical capacity building and access to technology and finance, smallholders can seize available opportunities and engage in the cultivation of high-value crops in demand by regional markets, especially vegetables and fruits. The development of such value chains holds employment opportunities in trading, processing, packaging and transportation activities. Value-chain analysis and mapping need to identify entry points and specific support for smallholders of both genders and the landless to take advantage of new employment opportunities.

The domestic national market also provides sizeable employment opportunities, with two trends: urbanization and rising tourism. According to the last report of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the proportion of urban population in Myanmar will rise from 34 percent (2014) to 55 percent (2050). In addition, tourism is expected to continue its rise. The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism indicated that tourist arrivals to Myanmar in the first half of 2014 increased more than 40 percent compared with the same period last year.

These trends present a range of on- and off-farm employment opportunities for men and women in rural areas. For smallholders, it will be about increasing food production and selecting the right products in order to respond to the increasing demand from tourists and the urban population. This will require capacity building to increase yields and quality of produce. This will also require better roads, transportation, processing/packaging facilities, and maintenance services, which could be important sources of job creation. The potential to engage in niche markets such as organic production of vegetables and fruits should be explored, as tourists are often sensitive to quality and health issues. In the longer run, the development of fair-trade value chains should also be considered. Potential for ecotourism activities in rural areas should be explored to create jobs (e.g. in hotels, restaurants, as tourist guides), especially for the landless and youth in existing tourist sites (e.g. Bagan, Inlay Lake) and in other areas such as the hilly regions.

Across the regions, development of the agribusiness sector (still very limited) has also the potential to create many off-farm jobs in rural areas. Table 5 shows some of the off-farm activities identified during the field mission.

Table 5: Example of off-farm activities in the four regions/states visited

	State/region			
	Mon State	Ayeyarwaddy Region	Chin State	Mandalay Region
Agri-business	Preserved fruits	Rice mills Processed fish/ shrimp	Coffee, tea, grapes (for wine- making)	Potato chips, bean paste, Mixed beans
Other	Nipa palm products (roofs, mats, furniture). This activity involves many women.		Weaving	Handicrafts

Source: Field mission.

In the context of Myanmar, FAO has the opportunity to take a stronger lead role in supporting decent rural employment, by sharing its knowledge and best practices in the ‘Agriculture & rural development sector-working group’. FAO and ILO have opportunities to collaborate in issues such as youth employment, child labour and social protection. Both organizations can facilitate a dialogue between agriculture (e.g. the MoAI, MoLFRD, representatives of producers’ associations) and labour stakeholders on decent rural employment and youth employment. For this to happen and based on meetings with ILO in Yangon, concrete suggestions to be further discussed include the participation of the MoAI to sessions of the ‘Employment opportunities sector-working group’ and the creation of a ‘youth employment cluster’ under this sector-working group, where FAO and agriculture stakeholders could participate.

ILO is supporting a national dialogue on social protection to raise the social protection platform. FAO could collaborate on this issue by supporting the design of adequate social protection schemes in the field of agriculture. In addition, since January 2014, a full project under the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour has been launched in Myanmar with five components: knowledge base, awareness raising, legislation and policies, capacity building and direction action. A national technical working group on child labour has been established with the support of the ILO to review policies and legislation including the Minimum Age for Work Law and to develop a list of hazardous work. It is recommended that agricultural stakeholders be invited to join this working group to be informed and sensitized on the issue. FAO can provide technical inputs for the inclusion of agriculture-related hazardous tasks within the national list of hazardous work. The results of the ILO current survey on child labour may also be useful to include a component on the prevention of child labour in agriculture and rural areas in the NAPA. Another area for potential collaboration between ILO and FAO at the policy level includes the review of the occupational safety and health (OSH) legislation and national list of hazardous work. Finally, during 2015, ILO will be organizing different consultations to finalize its Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) for Myanmar. Agricultural stakeholders and FAO will be invited to join in this exercise. The ongoing labour force survey is also expected to be published around July 2015, and should bring useful data for the NAPA.

In September 2013, UNIDO launched the initial phase of the programme Fostering Pro-Poor and Inclusive Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) development. The project focuses on increasing the competitiveness of MSMEs through developing clusters and business linkages. It

is currently facilitating cluster development in the lacquerware and weaving sectors. UNIDO is also providing policy advice including the review of the small and micro enterprises law and the preparation of an industrial zone law. While UNIDO does not currently have a project focused on youth, there is interest to further discuss opportunities to collaborate with FAO on youth employment in rural areas.

IOM participates in the Vocational Skills Development Program led by Swisscontact and Inbas as a project implementation partner on the component of the Mobile Training Unit (MTU).⁴ The beneficiaries of the MTU are the disadvantaged persons of both sexes and various ethnic backgrounds in the southeast of Myanmar, a region characterized by complex migration dynamics. The MTU aims to offer skills' development opportunities, which helps the marginalized to improve their income through gainful employment or self-employment. Coordinated Vocational Training Courses will be running in different locations, i.e. village tracts, townships and city capitals of the southeast, to increase the accessibility of the beneficiaries to the relevant vocational training opportunities. IOM is planning to train 3 000 people from Kayin and Mon by the end of 2017 on various vocational skill sets belonging to electricians, mechanics, tailors and hair stylists. It may be worth investigating the opportunity to include agriculture-related skills in such a programme or to use a similar model when developing agriculture-related vocational programmes targeted at comparable disadvantaged groups.

Increased mobility (especially with motorbikes) and access to cell phones in rural areas presents options and opportunities for men and women, especially youth, to engage in entrepreneurial activities, and increase their access to information (related to extension, market prices, mobile banking for example). However, significant challenges remain in terms of reaching out to remote villages that currently have no road, electricity or phone/network coverage.

1.9. Constraints

Without secure land tenure, farmers have no incentive to farm sustainably, invest in higher quality inputs and better technology. There is still much concern about the outcome of the ongoing land reform. The laws do not acknowledge common customary rights and practices for managing and transferring land (especially upland ethnic areas). Farmers who cultivate lands not officially classified as farmland cannot receive a land title (farmland is the only land to be issued a certificate). Under the Vacant, Fallow and Virgin Lands Management Law, individuals and private companies will be able to purchase or lease (for up to 30 years) land considered currently vacant. However, the share and rights of smallholders versus large/commercial investors to purchase and lease land is not clear. Civil society organizations have called for more time and transparency in the wide consultation process currently undertaken by the government.

The small size of land plots due in part to the inheritance practices, which split plots among family members ('fragmentation'), is also creating less viable holdings. In addition, climate vulnerability, soil erosion and reduced yield (hilly regions and dry zones) contribute to the degradation of agricultural land and lead to food insecurity and migration. New migration patterns are creating what seems a contradictory situation of rural labour shortage while there is also the lack of decent work opportunities (mainly due to low wages in rural areas and better wages in neighbouring regions or countries).

⁴<http://www.iom.int/cms/en/sites/iom/home/where-we-work/asia-and-the-pacific/myanmar.html>

Rural areas suffer from the lack or absence of infrastructures, especially roads, water for consumption and for irrigation, and electricity. Mountainous regions are particularly disadvantaged. Lack of coordination and regulation along value chains, lack of adequate transportation, storage facilities and crop-processing units are other challenges for small smallholders. There are various cooperatives facilitating access to seeds, machinery and loans but no services related to marketing. Lack of appropriate financing is another important issue for the development of agricultural value chains.

Finally, the lack of technical, organizational or managerial human capital is a major constraint. The educational and vocational training system needs to be reviewed and updated with a market-oriented perspective. In particular, the capability of the country to attract, develop and retain skilled youth in rural areas will be crucial to mitigate migration movements to urban areas or overseas. The government's staff based in the regions and townships is lacking the necessary skills, resources and coordination mechanism to provide adequate advice to farmers in more integrated farming practices. Other constraints include the lack of financial services available and the lack of data on the current status of the labour market.

POVERTY AND SOCIAL INCLUSIVENESS

There is a strong linkage between rural employment and poverty. Rural employment is a critical means for poverty and hunger reduction, as labour is often the only asset that poor people own. Low returns from agriculture and low wages do not ensure decent levels of livelihoods and access to sufficient nutritious food for smallholders and rural workers. The rural poor account for 84 percent of the total poor. Not surprisingly, poverty is higher in states/regions that lack rural infrastructures, especially roads and water, which have been affected by ethnic conflicts (e.g. Shan, Rakhine and Chin states) or natural disasters (Delta, coastal areas). Disaggregated data on poverty reveal that the highest values of poverty incidence are observed in Chin State (73 percent), followed by Rakhine (44 percent), Tanintharyi (33 percent), Shan (33 percent), and Ayeyarwaddy (32 percent) states (IIHLCS 2010).

More than 32 percent of adults live on less than US\$2.00 per day and 72 percent on less than US\$10.00 per day. Transitory poverty, which comprises entries into and escapes from poverty, appears to be a significant phenomenon in Myanmar. It affects 28 percent of households. Both rural and urban areas have relatively high levels of transitory poverty vs. chronic poverty at 19 vs. 5 percent, and 31 vs. 12 percent, respectively. The high levels of transitory poverty are found in states/divisions with both high and low poverty incidence, such as Chin and Yangon, respectively. This situation is due in part to the high instability of income from mostly temporary and seasonal labour.

Table 6: Poverty dynamics in Myanmar 2005-2010 (percent)

	Chronic poverty	Transitory poverty	
		Descent	Escape
Urban	10	11.3	16.5
Urban	5	7.4	11.6
Rural	11.9	12.7	18.3

Sources: IHLCA Survey (2004-2005), IHLCA Survey (2009-2010).

While there is no legal limitation to the participation of women in the labour market, a major gender gap still exists. Most women still remain in lower skilled and lower paid jobs. The double burden of women in rural areas with their responsibilities of collecting fuelwood and water as well as taking care of children is aggravated by male outmigration. This situation leaves little time for women to engage in training (when available) and income-generating activities beyond daily jobs in road construction, stone grinding and small trade (e.g. going to the closest town to sell their produce in the market or stores). Early marriage and low levels of education, as well as little access to financial services impede their full engagement in the labour market. In order to ensure women's full participation in the labour market, support programmes need to include interventions that will reduce women's burden and time constraints e.g. child care services, water and sanitation infrastructure, biogas stoves.

Myanmar has a diverse ethnic population with about 135 ethnic minorities comprising a third of the total population. Years of conflicts and displacement have resulted in disadvantage or exclusion of these minorities from employment, and high levels of poverty. The lack of

employment opportunities makes them a particularly vulnerable and precarious group, especially young people. Particular attention needs to be given to ensuring the inclusion of these groups in development programmes, taking into account the specific constraints they face (e.g. in terms of access to education, land, freedom of movement, social discrimination), as well as their preferences and knowledge.

Social protection in Myanmar is very limited and health insurance is not available in the market. There is no (or very little) data available on social protection coverage. Social protection is composed of two main social security schemes for public and private sector workers in the formal economy. Pension schemes are directed to civil servants while the existing social security scheme covers only employees from the formal private sector in cases of sickness, maternity, employment injury and death. A few small-scale assistance programmes also exist mainly to support children's access to school (e.g. Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Settlement, MoSWRS). In total, it is estimated that less than 2 million persons benefit from these schemes. The government passed a new Social Security Law in 2012, which should be implemented soon. The ILO, as a member of the sector-working group on social protection (co-chaired by UNICEF and MoSWRS) engaged a national dialogue exercise with relevant stakeholders to assess the social protection situation in Myanmar and draw policy recommendations to achieve a comprehensive social protection platform.⁵

In September 2013, a Cash Transfer Working Group was established with development and humanitarian professionals. Cash transfer programming was first introduced in Myanmar during the rehabilitation period following Cyclone Nargis and then used after Cyclone Giri and in Kachin. Currently, some international organizations such as Save the Children, the World Food Programme (WFP) and World Vision are providing cash transfers to extremely vulnerable communities.

Decent employment is one of the most sustainable and dignified means of social inclusion and poverty reduction. It is also a fully-fledged human right, included in international human rights law, giving each person the right to decent work as a means of personal development and socio-economic inclusion. Interventions to support decent rural employment will need to combine the development of inclusive national and regional value chains that foster job creation and linkages between smallholders, SMEs and producers' organizations, as well as provision of market-oriented education and vocational training, access to financial and social services and productive assets. The agricultural transformation expected in Myanmar will also require integrated approaches that promote not only increased productivity in agriculture, but also non-farm gender-responsive employment opportunities related to the modernization of agriculture and increased demand for processed food and services, and improved OSH.

⁵See ILO draft report; available at <http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/ShowProject.action?id=2487>

RECOMMENDED AREAS OF INTERVENTIONS AND INVESTMENT

Promoting decent rural employment (DRE) is not only about creating more but also generating better employment opportunities as well as upgrading existing jobs (e.g. with higher return and better working conditions) (FAO 2012). The report suggests the following interconnected four areas of interventions to achieve the overall objective of more and better employment in agriculture and rural areas:

- Support policy and institutional change to promote decent rural employment;
- Integrate decent rural employment components in support programmes for smallholders and the landless;
- Design and implement a market-oriented vocational training and rural youth entrepreneurship programme; and
- Design and implement social protection schemes/programmes that support decent rural employment.

These interventions will need to take into account specificities of different social groups and agro-ecological zones. In particular, the interventions need to account for differences in terms of access (or not) to land and other productive assets, gender-specific constraints, and diverging migration trends (across regions/states and with neighbouring countries). Land-rights holders and the landless do not face the same constraints and do not have the same needs as mentioned earlier. Different pathways are recommended for different social groups, especially land-rights holders, the landless and youth.

1.1. Support policy and institutional change to promote decent rural employment

Myanmar is going through a major transition, which translates in an ongoing review and revision of a series of policies and laws. To date, there is no national policy or strategy on employment or youth. The NSPARD and Rural Development Strategic Framework mention the importance of *enhancing income-generating opportunities*. However, there is no clear plan on how this will be translated into practical terms. The elaboration of the NAPA brings a unique opportunity to make concrete recommendations on how to support decent rural employment through agriculture, and to acknowledge the opportunities arising in non-farm sectors through more dynamic and modern agriculture. Table 7 shows some of the policies and laws that can enhance decent employment in rural areas with suggested actions (a non-exhaustive list, based on information collected during the field mission).

Table 7: Policies and legislation relevant to decent rural employment (DRE)

Policies/laws	Relevance to DRE	Suggested actions
Land reform (consultations ongoing)	Access to land to invest in farming activities Secure land tenure Equal access to land for men and women	Raise awareness on the importance of an inclusive and transparent process in the implementation of the land reform – encourage coordinated messages from international organizations for the government to use the Voluntary Guidelines for Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests
Investment law (under revision)	Secure land tenure, especially for smallholders and ethnic groups Sustainable use of natural resources Large companies accountable	Raise awareness on the importance of socially and environmentally sustainable agricultural investment – encourage coordinated messages from international organizations for the government to use the Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment that Respect Rights, Livelihoods and Resources
Minimum Wages Act [Law 2013, minimum wage under discussion – temporary minimum wage 56 000 kyat (US\$65)]	Agricultural workers receive a decent wage Equal pay for women and men	Advocate (or clarify) with the government to include agricultural casual and temporary wage workers in the law. Ensure that public employment programmes for rural people pay careful attention to wage setting
OSH legislation (under review with ILO support)	(Agriculture is one of the most hazardous sectors) Safe working conditions Prevent injuries, disabilities, death and diseases	FAO can collaborate with the ILO to support the Dept. of Labour, Dept. of Agriculture, Fisheries, Livestock and Forestry in the review of OSH regulations to include agriculture subsectors (especially for small producers and informal agricultural wage workers). Use FAO’s standards and codes of practice (e.g. related to pesticide use, logging, and safety at sea, etc.) to review/update the national list of hazardous work Promote the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication
Social protection strategy (ongoing)		FAO can collaborate with the ILO to support the extension of social protection coverage to rural areas especially small-scale producers and workers in both the formal and informal rural economy, and engage in discussions on the social protection floor

Source: Field mission.

Other policies and laws that are relevant to support decent rural employment include microfinance policies, small and medium enterprise development strategy and trade policy and would need further analysis to understand if and how they integrate rural employment. Priority needs to be given to the review and update of existing policies and laws. However, in the long run, the government is recommended to consider the elaboration of a national employment policy and a national youth policy, and possibly a rural employment strategy, in view of the sizeable population living in rural areas and the specific employment challenges this population face.

While the government has put in place consultation and support committees at the regional, township and village levels for planning and implementing development projects, the capacity of government staff to facilitate and support this process in a participatory and integrated manner is low and there is little coordination between departments. The consultation process of the NAPA is a good opportunity to start building a culture of cross-sectoral dialogue and collaboration, but a more thorough capacity needs assessment is needed. Inclusion of a component on decent rural employment into capacity needs assessments of government staff planned in the framework of the NAPA is recommended. Based on this assessment, the types of capacity development activities that can be offered subsequently may include tools to integrate youth employment, OSH, child labour prevention and gender equality into development projects/plans.

Currently there is no space for labour and agriculture stakeholders to dialogue and collaborate on employment issues. Based on discussions with the ILO during the field mission, it is recommended that FAO and ILO collaborate to bring agriculture and labour stakeholders closer together e.g. by inviting representatives of agricultural subsectors to sessions of the 'Employment opportunities sector-working group'. There may also be an opportunity to do the same on issues such as child labour prevention and social protection, through the respective working groups. Additionally, it is recommended that decent rural employment issues be discussed in the 'Agriculture & rural development sector-working group'. In this context, FAO has the opportunity to share its knowledge and best practices on decent rural employment from other countries. It is crucial for FAO to ensure follow up on these preliminary discussions with the ILO, first with the assistance of the national consultant on rural employment, to ensure that the second phase of the NAPA elaboration takes these opportunities into account.

Lack of data on rural employment and rural markets is a major constraint in reporting on Myanmar's current situation and developing adequate policies to support decent rural employment. The detailed results of the national census and the ILO-supported national labour force survey are expected by May and July 2015 respectively. This information will be timely in the elaboration of NAPA's intervention and investment programmes. It will also be useful to identify the remaining knowledge gaps on rural labour, to support the monitoring and evaluation systems of the interventions suggested and the integration of relevant decent rural employment indicators (e.g. age and gender-disaggregated data, as well as adequate indicators to capture MSMS and household-based entrepreneurial activities). In the process of reviewing/upgrading agricultural statistical systems and labour market information systems, it is recommended to integrate a module on rural labour including age and gender-specific data, that also adequately captures issues related to seasonal wage employment in agriculture and employment in rural non-farm activities.

1.2. Integrate decent rural employment into support programmes for smallholders and the landless

Recommendations made in this section are about integrating decent rural employment issues/components in the agricultural subsectoral interventions (link with interventions proposed under crop production, postharvest and agroprocessing, marketing, finance, fisheries, livestock, forestry components). The recommended approach is to combine market-related skills development activities (technical, marketing), access to finance and to markets (suppliers/buyers) and support to producers' organizations to improve livelihoods and working conditions of smallholders and the landless.

It is important to consider different strategies to support smallholders depending on their level of poverty and size of holdings, the agro-ecological zones, and gender preferences. These strategies, which are not mutually exclusive, may include:

- For subsistence smallholders (especially <2 acres), the focus should be on the diversification of crops cultivated to improve the family’s nutritional diet, and if possible selling these higher-value crops (e.g. horticulture, fruits) in local markets; support to agro-forestry systems or purchase of small livestock (chickens, pigs, goats); and access to off-farm jobs locally, for example through public employment programmes in rural areas to reduce distress outmigration;
- For smallholders with larger holdings and engaged in commercial activities (mainly rice production), the focus should be on the increase of agricultural productivity through access to quality seeds and inputs, the use of good agricultural practices and the reduction of postharvest losses, as well as the introduction of small mechanization to compensate for labour shortage; and
- In addition, for women, it is important to facilitate access to labour-saving technologies that will reduce their work burden and time constraints such as energy-saving stoves, child care facilities and local water points close to their homes.

The development of value chains will need to take into account the different agro-ecological specificities of each region and the challenges each group face to identify the ‘niche products and services’ with potential for local value addition. For example, mountainous regions have a comparative advantage in terms of biodiversity, climate and culture, with opportunities to develop a variety of ‘niche products and services’ (e.g. NWFPs such as honey, medicinal and aromatic plants, and ecotourism activities).

For those who do not have access to land and depend on casual labour, the focus should be on expanding decent job opportunities (on and off farm, in rural areas and in towns, as entrepreneurs or employees), based on market needs and potential. Based on information collected and interviews during the field mission, three areas that have potential for jobs should be investigated:

Table 8: Examples of job opportunities (field mission)

Potential	Examples of job opportunities
Modernization of agriculture	Machinery operations and maintenance, motorbike repair, irrigation techniques, hydroponics and greenhouse technology, supply of small equipment and spare parts
Agroprocessing	Cottage industries, SMEs for processing of fruits (e.g. jams, preserved fruits), vegetables (e.g. potato chips, bean paste, spicy sauce), milk/yoghurt, aquaculture, small livestock (chicken/eggs, goats), medicinal plants
Non-agricultural activities	Weaving, tailoring, handicrafts (e.g. nipa palm, bamboo), tourism, ecotourism in mountainous regions

Source: Field mission.

Particular attention needs to be given to opportunities arising through rural-urban linkages, growing sources of demand (e.g. tourism), and market hubs (existing ones e.g. Yangon, Mandalay and others to be created at the region/state levels). Based on the activities selected in the different regions, vocational training packages (technical and entrepreneurial skills) will be designed (link with interventions proposed under crop production, postharvest and agroprocessing, fisheries, livestock, forestry component). Depending on constraints faced by specific groups (the landless, ethnic minorities, women, youth), other skills may be added such as literacy and numeracy, hygiene and sanitation, and leadership (see the Action Aid example in Box 1). In certain cases, existing vocational training centres and curricula could be used but would need to be upgraded/updated. In other cases, it may be relevant to rely and build on existing activities offered by local NGOs.

Box 1: Socio-economic development network – CDZ Myanmar (Action Aid)

The project provides poor rural women access to vocational training in the production of quality handcrafts complemented with, for example, literacy, numeracy, HIV prevention, hygiene and gender training. After graduating, a select number of women will be encouraged to form Women Producers Support Groups (WPSG). These will be linked to the market through the Craft Producers' Network (CPN) and sales outlets. The CPN will comprise representatives of the local business community, local authorities and WPSG representatives

Training should not be a stand-alone activity. Follow-up activities should include access to adapted financial schemes for start-up businesses (link to microfinance component) with assistance in developing business plans and applying for loans, as well as linkages with suppliers and buyers. For those SMEs that exist already, the focus should be on providing technical skills to improve storage and reduce losses and improve working conditions (OSH). For those seeking work, it will be important to facilitate their access to information on job opportunities and linkages with potential employers. Labour offices are established in the townships but the field mission did not provide enough time to visit them. It will be important to understand their role in providing information on job offers and demands and facilitating matching between job seekers and employers. The results of the ongoing labour force survey will also provide the basis to upgrade and develop more efficient labour market information systems. In this process, it is recommended to ensure that relevant information for rural women and men, migrants and youth are integrated.

Because agriculture and fisheries are some of the most hazardous sectors, it is recommended to include the promotion of safe technology, working practices and OSH in capacity development activities of extension workers, and to review and update existing extension curricula, making those issues mandatory components. Smallholders' organizations and other community-based organizations can also benefit from such training and facilitate access to protective materials/equipment for their members when/where relevant. FAO and ILO have developed many tools that could be useful to design and implement such capacity development activities. In regions where child labour has been identified (ILO ongoing survey), a component on sensitization on child labour in farming or fisheries can also be included.

Agricultural programmes need to include a component to support the creation or strengthening of smallholders' organizations. If smallholders organize in groups, they can create economies of scale and negotiate better prices with intermediaries (e.g. between rice farmers and rice millers

and traders), and seize opportunities in niche markets at the national as well as regional level. For example, the construction of a new harbour in Mon State will open trading opportunities between Myanmar and Thailand, Lao PDR and Viet Nam. Smallholders' organizations can also play an important role in purchasing inputs and equipment, providing/sharing storage facilities and financial services to their members. Particular attention will need to be given to the inclusion of women in organizations or support to the creation of women-only organizations. In the same way, it is important to facilitate youth integration into producer organizations (e.g. the youth arm of a producer organization) and/or the creation of youth organizations.

1.3. Design and implement a market-oriented vocational training and rural youth entrepreneurship programme

While agriculture is the mainstay of the domestic economy and the major employer, it is not an attractive sector for youth and few see themselves working in it. It is perceived as very hard work with low return. There are few job opportunities in rural areas. As early as 15 years old, young girls and boys migrate to towns and overseas in search of work.

In order to change the negative perception towards agriculture and avoid depopulation of rural areas, and also enable the country to benefit further from its agricultural potential, it is important to generate attractive and decent jobs for the youth in the agriculture sector and improve their entrepreneurial skills to develop rural non-farm activities. The anticipated agricultural transformation and modernization could be key to shifting this negative perception. For this reason, it is recommended to include a specific programme in the NAPA to support rural youth in agriculture. Since 2011, FAO has developed and implemented successfully an innovative public-private partnership model for youth employment in agriculture,⁶ which could be useful to support rural youth employment in Myanmar.

This model combines various components:

- Tailor-made and market-oriented vocational training activities (technical and entrepreneurial skills) that are adapted to rural youth's levels of understanding and the constraints they face (such as the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools approach);
- Linkages with public actors such as the Department of Agriculture to facilitate access to land and inputs, and private actors such as farmers' organizations, cooperatives and microfinance institutions to access credit and provide guidance to youth in the selection of higher-value agricultural products and market opportunities; and
- Inclusion of youth in programme design, as well as relevant national policy and strategy processes.

It is important to follow up on opportunities identified during the field mission to establish technical and financial partnerships with UNIDO and ILO on rural youth employment.

⁶<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4118e.pdf>

1.4. Design and implement social protection schemes/programmes that support decent rural employment

Poor people in rural areas have precarious jobs and irregular incomes, increasing their vulnerability to shocks (illness, bad harvest, extended lean season, etc.) and risks of food insecurity. This is especially the case for very small landholders and the landless, fishery-dependent communities, ethnic minorities and those living in remote areas. When they have jobs, they are mostly informal with no written contracts and little or no protection. Social protection and decent rural employment are interlinked and can reinforce and complement each other. Social protection initiatives can contribute to reinforcing the resilience of the poor rural population, improve human capital development and enable poor rural households to better manage risks and invest in productive activities. Social protection can also provide direct temporary jobs through public works' programmes and improve opportunities for farm or non-farm employment.

The national technical working group on social protection chaired by the Ministry of Social Welfare and UNICEF is facilitating a dialogue and providing inputs to develop a master plan for social protection and a social protection platform. The World Bank and WFP are also part of this group. It is recommended that FAO participate in this work to ensure that social protection programmes include rural workers and smallholders. Meetings with the ILO in Yangon during the field mission confirmed the interest of ILO in partnering with FAO on promoting social protection in rural areas. This would be important in the second phase of the NAPA when developing social protection programmes for rural areas, in order to identify possible programmatic synergies and complementary interventions on social protection and decent rural employment (e.g. through joint targeting).

Within social protection policies and programmes, synergies can be leveraged by refining the objectives and design features, e.g. public work programmes designed to facilitate school-to-work transition, integrating OSH components to improve working conditions, including skills' development while ensuring access to health care (see Box 2 for an example), ensuring adequate level of wages (and equal pay for men and women) or including cash transfers through bank accounts to build beneficiaries' financial history.

Box 2: The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme

The distinctive innovative feature of this scheme is its rights-based framework with the following components: workers' rights (no prerequisite skills, demand-based, local employment, flexibility) transparency (legal job cards, right to information, and accountability, social audits, grievance redressal mechanisms) and productive green jobs (water conservation, irrigation facilities, tree plantation, horticulture plantation on land owned by households below the poverty line, etc.).

FAO has recently signed a Letter of Agreement with the Lodestar Myanmar Company Limited (a social business, which started as a government-NGO consortium working closely with the Ministry of Social Affairs). One of the objectives of this agreement is to gain insight into the needs and current access to/availability of social protection at the community level, in order to inform the development of social protection programmes in the context of sustainable rural development. Special attention will be given to fisheries-dependent communities. The results of the study should be available soon and presented in a national workshop in Yangon. The results

should be used to develop a social protection programme under the NAPA. FAO's experience with the Protection to Production project implemented in Africa with UNICEF can also be used as guidance to develop social protection schemes for very poor and labour-constrained households.

RELATION TO OTHER RURAL SECTORS

Any approach to decent rural employment needs to recognize that many households obtain revenues from both farm and non-farm activities, in the formal as well as informal economy. The ones that are better off have often multiple income-generating activities (farming, rearing animals, selling in markets, working in shops, engaging in casual labour, etc.). Despite this heterogeneity, some features of rural employment are common across sectors reviewed under the NAPA, e.g. working conditions, constraints in access to finance and markets, low skills and low wages. Table 9 presents how employment issues have been integrated in the sectoral studies available at the time of concluding this report.

Table 9: Integration of employment issues in other sectorial studies

Sectors	Rural employment-related recommendations
Crop production	Opportunity: Support to farm enterprises and value chains, e.g. kitchen gardening, horticulture and livestock production, especially for small and marginal farmers and the landless; introduce a cash-for-work programme to provide rural employment; upgrade extension agents' skills, ICT for rural development planning and village information centres.
Water and soils	Participative, community-based soil and water conservation activities present opportunities for paid work. Preference should be given to poorer and vulnerable people where cash-for-work is used. A significant proportion of participants should be women (possibly introducing a minimum quota of 40-50%) Work schedules should be set by the communities, flexible enough to allow labourers to participate without compromising on harvest work or daily housework. Guidelines for labour practices and a checklist for regular monitoring of working conditions should be used throughout implementation. Labour practices should include a zero-tolerance policy on harassment.
Livestock	Cattle, sheep and goats, chickens, pigs; access to credit to buy livestock, share-farming livestock, hired labour in commercial livestock raising. Self-employment potential in raising animals, providing inputs and services, trading, transport, slaughtering, processing and sales. Challenge: children may take care of livestock and not go to school.
Forestry	The activities of salvage logging, tending and regeneration of degraded forests can provide employment (Bago Yoma, Shan Plateau, CDZ and Delta).
Fishery	The sector provides livelihood to nearly 1 268 000 fishers and 216 284 fish farmers. This excludes the large numbers employed in trading, transportation and processing industries. The employment potential of crab farms is significant.

Source: Field mission.

An enabling environment, targeted investments in rural infrastructures and operational programmes are necessary to support the promotion of decent rural employment and

development of the rural economy. Investments should include adapted irrigation systems (e.g. small-scale irrigation facilities such as reservoirs, small tanks, ponds, canals), roads and electrification as well as the provision of drinking water, adequate health, education and child-care services in rural areas. In addition, increased tenure security needs to be guaranteed for smallholders to undertake longer term investments in their land. Market-oriented skills' development, adequate financial services (e.g. that do not require land as collateral) and promotion of savings schemes, support to producers' organizations, and local governance are other important aspects for decent rural employment.

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ANNEX 2: LIST OF MAIN DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND NGOS IN MYANMAR WITH PROGRAMMES RELATED TO AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Development Organizations	Main programs related to agriculture and rural development
UNDP	New country program (2013-2015) as a follow up to the Human Development Initiative (HDI-IV) initiated in 1994. It consists of three pillars, namely (1) Sustainable Inclusive Community Development, (2) Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Disaster Risk Reduction, and (3) Policy Advocacy, Analysis and Democratic Governance including livelihood improvement and support for agriculture.
UNOPS	Livelihood and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT) is a multi-donor fund established in March 2009 aiming at reducing poverty and hunger in Myanmar. The priority beneficiaries of the program are small-scaled farm households and landless, as well as large-scaled farm households who employ landless inhabitants. The target areas are Ayeyarwaddy Delta, Central Dry Zone, Shan State, Kachin State and Rakhine State.
FAO	Country Programming Framework 2012-2016. The CPF has identified seven priority outcomes covering a number of priority areas: food and agricultural production including fisheries and forestry sub-sectors, food security, food safety, human resource development, land use and land management, sustainable management of natural resources, preparedness for and mitigation of disasters and climate change.
WFP	Asset Creation Program. The objective of the program is to mitigate natural disasters, improve access to market, and diversification of income source in the following areas: Shan State, Kachin State, Chin State, Magway Region and Rakhine State. Main activities of the program include water resources development such as dam and pond, road and bridges construction to improve accessibility of rural villages, land development such as soil conservation and irrigation, and environmental management to retain soil water and reduce flood risk. FAO is one of the partners of the program.
World Bank	The WB has recently completed a Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD) that aims to identify priorities for Myanmar to reduce extreme poverty and boost shared prosperity. The World Bank Group is preparing a scaled-up partnership program that is expected to include support for energy, health, agriculture, water resources management, and other key development priorities (e.g. support to Myanmar's National Community-Driven Development Project).
Asian Development Bank	ADB developed an interim country partnership strategy (ICPS) for Myanmar for the period 2012-2014. Key sectors include transport; energy; agriculture and natural resources. ADB has also developed the country operations business plan (COBP) for 2014-2016, which proposes that initial lending and investment grant operations focus primarily on access, connectivity, and infrastructure development. resources; education; and urban development, including water and sanitation.

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IFAD	Fostering Agricultural Revitalization in Myanmar Project. The project has 2 components: agricultural infrastructure development (expansion of irrigated areas) and agricultural and business services (knowledge on access to services and technologies, and finance for MSMEs). Targeted areas: six irrigation schemes in Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory.
Japan International Cooperation Agency	Some of the projects related to agriculture include irrigation development in Western Bago region, Proposed Project for Underprivileged Farmers (2KR), Project for Mangrove Rehabilitation Plan for Enhancement of Disaster Prevention in Ayeyarwaddy Delta (on-going), Small-scale Aquaculture Extension for Promotion of Livelihood of Rural Communities in Myanmar Project (on-going), Project for development of water saving agriculture technology in Central Dry Zone (proposed), Project for Small-scale Aquaculture Extension for Promotion of Livelihood of Rural Communities in Central Dry Zone (proposed), Adviser on Livestock Development in Central Dry Zone (on-going).
USAID	USAID focuses on health, food security and livelihoods improvement. It supports programs to increase in agriculture production, improve post-harvest technologies, access to agricultural inputs and to markets, livelihood support and sustainable natural resources management, and capacity development.
DFID	LIFT has provided a platform for enhanced policy engagement on agriculture, food security, and rural development. DFID also supported £ 7.5 million to 4 micro finance institutions to provide micro finance services to rural poor since October 2012. The loans granted to the rural poor are mainly for livestock raising, horticulture and paddy farming.
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research	Research projects (on 5 sectors, namely rice, pulses, fisheries, livestock, technical extension) the target areas of Central Dry Zone - Ayeyarwaddy Delta.
Korea International Cooperation Agency	Under a five-year plan, the KOICA is helping Myanmar establish a Post-harvest Technology Application Center in Nay Pyi Taw and provide farm equipment for killing pests in fruits and vegetables plants.
GIZ	Priority areas: promoting vocational training, strengthening the private sector and developing the financial sector. Under the first priority area, GIZ is supporting TVET system (2012-2015). The project provides exemplary support for individual training facilities and the respective Myanmar ministries in designing a demand-driven, cooperative vocational training that is sensitive to gender aspects.
ILO	Priorities: elimination of forced labour and effective implementation of freedom of association. In 2015, consultations to design their Decent Work Country Programme. Ongoing programmes on SME and child labour.
UNIDO	Project “Fostering pro-poor and inclusive MSME development in Myanmar”. The project has helped provide the necessary policy advice to the Ministry of Industry, and the Ministry of Cooperatives, and to support the review of Myanmar’s SME Law. It will also help in the preparation of an Industrial Zone Law. Under the project, a pilot intervention in the Lacquer-ware cluster in Bagan is also foreseen.

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UNCDF	Making Access Possible Programme (MAP) and the Microlead Expansion Programme. Objective: to create inclusive financial sectors by providing access to financial services for individuals and micro and small businesses.
NGO	Main programs related to agriculture and rural development
International Volunteers Service Association (AVSI)	Improvement of Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture Development Project (quality seed multiplication, promotion of low-input and organic based technologies, increase of irrigation water, provision of farm machinery and equipment, rehabilitation and construction of tube well, soil conservation, capacity building, etc.)
PACT	Microfinance Program (MFP)
Action Aid Myanmar	Improve the Livelihood and Food Security of the Rural Communities in Central Dry Zone and Delta Areas
Korea Rural Community Cooperation (KRC)	"Project for Improving Good Agricultural Practice on Rice, Vegetable and Fruit Crops, and Income by Integrated Agricultural Farming in Myanmar"
Consortium of Dutch NGOs (CDN)	Program of integrated post disastrous resettlement food security and community develop project
International Development Enterprises- Proximity Designs (IDE - Proximity)	Improve the Livelihoods of Small Farmer Households in Rural Areas (treble pumps and drip irrigation, low-cost water storage, etc.)
Organizational for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancements (OISCA)	Agro- Forestry Training Centre Project (Technical transfer, microcredit, construction of irrigation system, establishment of rice mill, construction of community infrastructure (round, community pond), construction of water supply system and sanitary improvement)
World Vision Myanmar (WVM)	Rural Community Based Agricultural Capacity Building and Development Program
Action Contre la Faim (ACF)	Food Security, income generation (food production, rice intensification, rice banks, vocational training, agricultural training, Dam construction)
Adventist Development & Relief Agency	Food Security (agriculture development, emergency food aid), Infrastructure, livelihood development, etc.
Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)	Livelihood and economic development, and food security.
CARE Myanmar	Food and livelihood security (agriculture, fisheries and livestock development, installation of irrigation system for increasing food production)

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CESVI Fondazione	Food security and livelihood security
GRET (Groupe de Recherche et d'Echanges Technologiques)	Agricultural value chain development in the Ayeyawady Delta (developing the linkages among the agricultural products value chains, improving the productivities for rice cultivation, pulses, vegetables, flowers, livestock breeding and aquaculture development, financial service for farmers)
Norwegian People's Aid	Agriculture and rural development (capacity building, Cyclone response program)
Partners	Livelihood and micro-projects (pigs distribution and home gardening)
ProgettoContinenti (PC)-Myanmar	Livelihood & food security, micro finance, seed provision for small scale farmers, promotion of organic fertilizers, marketing of products, provision of agricultural tools, improvement of irrigation system, seed banks for rural development fund, etc.
Saerananar	Agriculture and social economic (microfinance, agriculture development, organic farming, etc.)
Solidarites International	Provision of buffalos, tillage tool sets, training on improved cultivation techniques, rat control campaign, setting up demonstration plot, construction of storm resistant storage facilities for paddy seeds
Terre des Hommes Italia (TDH Italia)	Livelihood and agriculture development (construction and rehabilitation of wells, boreholes, water system and networks, ponds and dams for domestic and agricultural use, hydroponic water saving farming method)
Water, Research and training center (WRTC Myanmar)	Agricultural sector development (knowledge-based agriculture, irrigation, institutional capacity building)
Welthungerhilfe	Integrated food security, agriculture, livelihood and income generation, etc.
World Concern Myanmar	Sustainable agriculture and livelihood development
World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA)	Animal welfare (intensive farming, long distance transport and slaughter of animals for food), Community-based Early Warning System
Terra People Association (TPA)	JICA Partnership Program for Project for Self Development of Circulatory Symbiotic Society in Southern Shan State

Source: Directory of International Non-Government Organizations in Myanmar 2012.

ANNEX 3: PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS AND INVESTMENTS

Intervention 1: Support policy and institutional change to promote decent rural employment

Justification	Promoting decent employment in rural areas is vital to effective and long-term poverty reduction. Rural employment has been recognized as one of the key strategies to reduce poverty and achieve food security (MDG 1). However, agricultural and rural development policies and strategies often overlook the importance of this issue. The NSPARD and Rural Development Strategic Framework mention enhancing income-generating opportunities, but it is important that these opportunities ensure a living wage or income, security in the workplace, gender equality, access to social protection and respect for fundamental human rights. The elaboration of the NAPA and the on-going review of a series of policies and laws that are relevant to decent employment bring a unique opportunity to make concrete recommendations on how to support decent rural employment.
Objective	Provide policy and institutional support to key national stakeholders (mainly agricultural and rural development line-ministries, and representatives of producers' cooperatives, federations and unions) in order to improve the national enabling environment for decent rural employment.
Suggested topics and activities	(Short term < 5 years/ Long term-> 5 years)
Policy and legislation review and advice to mainstream DRE	Partner with ILO for the review of the following legislation: OSH, national list of hazardous work, social protection (to include agriculture sub-sectors, smallholders, casual workers and migrants' rights)- (S)
	Raise awareness and integrate principles of Voluntary Guidelines in ARD- related policies and NAPA. (Voluntary Guidelines for Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests Guidelines -Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication- The Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment RAI)- (S)
	Provide technical inputs to reflect DRE in ARD-related policies and NAPA, including in M&E systems to integrate relevant DRE indicators, and opportunities to link remittances with DRE programmes. (S)
	Provide technical inputs to include social and labour aspects into codes of conduct and certification schemes (e.g. forest certification schemes) (S)
	Based on results of the labour survey 2015, develop analysis on DRE and identify data and research gaps (S)
	Develop a 'roadmap' for the elaboration of a national employment strategy, in partnership with ILO and other key stakeholders (S)
	Elaboration of a national employment/rural employment strategy (L)
Dialogue and coordination	Partner with ILO to improve dialogue between agriculture and labour stakeholders e.g. by inviting representatives of agricultural sub-sectors (MoAI and MoLFRD) to sessions of the 'Employment opportunities sector-working group'. There may also be an opportunity to do the same with working groups on child labour prevention and social protection (opportunity to partner with UNICEF). (S)
	Raise awareness on decent rural employment in the 'Agriculture & rural development' sector-working group (Sharing knowledge and good practices) (S)

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Capacity Development	Raise awareness and undertake capacity needs assessment of relevant stakeholders at regional and townships levels on DRE and how to integrate its dimensions in development plans (identification and prioritization of capacity needs). (S)
	Design/implement technical workshops and trainings with support of partners such as ILO, develop guidance materials on specific DRE aspects. (S)
	Capacity building of line ministries to include DRE aspects into agricultural policies, strategies and programmes, as well as relevant M&E and statistical systems. (S)
	Provide technical inputs to improve Myanmar statistical capabilities on decent rural employment issues (e.g. strengthen statistical capabilities in the design of a module on rural labour including age and gender-specific data). (S/L)
Potential partners	ILO, UNICEF Employment opportunities sector-working group, National technical working group on social protection, National technical working group on Child Labour
Scope	National –Regional/townships level government (capacity building)
Duration	(Short term < 5 years/ Long term-> 5 years)
Expected cost	TBD (e.g. technical support project)

Intervention 2: Integrate Decent Rural Employment in Support Programmes for Smallholders and the Landless

Justification	<p>Women and men’s choices to engage and invest in specific economic activities and use their labour depend largely on their access and rights to land and tenure security as well as access to financial resources. Land-right holders and landless do not face the same constraints and need different types of support. But even those groups are not homogenous across the country with specific challenges for ethnic minorities, women, youth and those who migrate. It must also be recognized that many households and workers obtain revenues from both farm and non-farm activities, in the formal and informal economy.</p> <p>Promoting decent rural employment for poor smallholders and landless is not only about creating more but also better employment opportunities and upgrading existing jobs (e.g. with higher return and better working conditions) as well as addressing the whole range of decent work deficits that people in rural areas face (exclusion, low income, gender inequality, poor health and safety conditions, exploitation, lack of voice and inadequate protection). Decent rural employment promotion should focus on improving agricultural productivity, income diversification and working conditions of smallholders and small agro-processing businesses as well as supporting access to higher-productivity and higher wage opportunities in the rural non-farm economy for landless and migrants.</p> <p>Interventions that are proposed under the areas of crop production, fisheries, livestock, forestry, postharvest and agro-processing, need to take into account the specificities and constraints of different social groups and their impact on the quantity and quality of employment. Interventions need to combine market-related skills development activities (technical, marketing, entrepreneurship), adequate savings and financial schemes, and measures to facilitate the access of smallholders and small businesses to national and regional markets (including support to farmers’ organizations). Major investments in rural infrastructures are needed to support these interventions (e.g. roads, electrification, irrigation systems), and improve living conditions in rural areas (e.g. health services, child care, education), offering new incentives for people to stay in rural areas.</p>
Objective	Integrate DRE components in the agricultural sub-sectorial programmes of the NAPA
Suggested topics and activities	(Short term< 5 years/ Long term-> 5 years)
Capacity development	<p>Awareness raising. Develop and disseminate adapted guidance materials on specific DRE aspects of agriculture sub-sectors (using FAO and ILO knowledge and tools). (S)</p> <p>Design and implement adapted trainings in agriculture-specific OSH practices for extension agents with a priority focus on farming and fisheries (S)</p> <p>Support the integration of OSH in trainings planned in the different sub-sectors with a priority focus on farming and fisheries (S). Making OSH/safe working practices issues mandatory components of extension workers’ capacity development plans (L)</p> <p>Ensure that vocational education and training programmes combine not only technical skills with business and entrepreneurial skills, but additional skills related to specific needs of target groups e.g. literacy/numeracy (S)</p> <p>Sensitization activities on child labour in farming / fisheries in collaboration with ILO in regions where child labour has been identified (ILO ongoing survey) (S)</p>

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	Organize a capacity development workshop on child labour prevention in agriculture in collaboration with ILO (L)
Technical guidance	Technical guidance can be provided through the review of NAPA's investment's plans, elaboration of guidance materials, sensitization activities and capacity building workshops (S):
	To ensure that training programmes support skills development for agriculture related occupations as well as rural non-farm activities,
	To ensure the integration of measures for gender equality and specific support to reduce women's domestic tasks (e.g. labour saving technologies, easy access to water, alternative to firewood, child care services)
	To ensure inclusive business models: pilot business models that facilitate smallholders' participation in markets and value chains, establishment of contractual linkages among value chain stakeholders (forward contracts, contract farming, outgrower schemes, opportunity to create region/state level market hubs managed by smallholders' organizations)
	To define locally customized and affordable certification schemes (e.g. organic, fair trade, child labour free) in supported agricultural value chains
	To support savings and credit schemes adapted to the needs of different groups with adapted collateral mechanisms.
Potential partners	ILO
	Employment opportunities sector-working group
	National technical working group on Child Labour
Scope	Based on the sub-sectoral programmes geographical focus, areas with greater poverty and vulnerability (e.g CDZ, Delta and hilly regions), and vulnerable groups (to ensure adequate inclusion of men/women, youth, minority groups)
Expected cost	TBD (Cost is associated with the scale /budget of sub-sectoral programmes)

Intervention 3: Design and Implement a Market-oriented Vocational Training and Rural Youth Entrepreneurship Programme

<p>Justification</p>	<p>There are an estimated 16 million youth in Myanmar (31% of the total population) but more accurate data is expected out of the national census in May 2015. Currently, Myanmar has no policy, strategy or programme that targets specifically youth. Agriculture is not an attractive sector for youth and few see themselves in this sector. It is perceived as very hard work with low return. There are few job opportunities in rural areas. As early as 15 years old, young girls and boys migrate to towns and overseas in search of work, e.g. in shops (tea shops for boys), restaurants, garment industry, domestic work, construction, fishery related work (mainly men). They are usually in low-paid and low skilled jobs. Existing vocational training facilities have reached only a marginal number of rural youth, and are not really effective in providing skills that are in demand in the market.</p> <p>The challenge is to develop rural areas to make them attractive to young people in terms of employment prospects, education and training opportunities, health services and social life.</p> <p>In order to change the negative perception towards agriculture and avoid depopulation of rural areas, it is important to generate attractive and decent jobs for the youth. For this reason, it is recommended to include in the NAPA a specific programme to support rural youth employment. Since 2011, FAO has developed and implemented successfully an innovative public-private partnership model for youth employment in agriculture, which could be adapted to the context of Myanmar. Public-private partnerships are extremely important in the context of economic and social development.</p> <p>This model combines various components to address youth constraints (skills development, access to land, finance and markets):</p> <p>Tailor-made and market-oriented vocational training activities (technical and entrepreneurial skills) that are adapted to rural youth's levels of understanding and constraints they faced (such as the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools approach),</p> <p>Linkages with public actors such as Departments of Agriculture to facilitate access to land and inputs, and private actors such as farmer's organizations, cooperatives and micro-finance institutions to access credit and provide guidance to youth in the selection of higher-value agricultural products and market opportunities.</p> <p>Inclusion of youth in programme design, as well as relevant national policy and strategies debates and processes.</p> <p>There are opportunities to partner with ILO and UNIDO on this programme.</p>
<p>Objective</p>	<p>Improve livelihood for youth in rural areas by creating decent rural employment for young women and men along area-based priority agricultural value chains.</p>

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Suggested activities/components	S = Short term < 5 years L = Long term-> 5 years
Design	Develop criteria to select townships (e.g. based on the 4 agro-ecological zones, value chains with potential for employment creation identified in sectorial studies, youth population, trainings centers, presence of NGOs and ongoing development programme- e.g. ILO/UNIDO). (S)
	Organize a stakeholders' design workshop with the participation of youth to identify priority areas. (S)
Tailor-made and market-oriented vocational training activities	Contextualize the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) methodology based on assessment of youth's needs in targeted region/states and area-based selected priority value chains (emphasis can be made on agro-business, which has great potential in Myanmar). The subjects and exercises of the trainings are chosen jointly with the youth and in collaboration local partners. (S)
	The JFFLS methodology has been successfully implemented in different contexts. It combines support to vocational educational training opportunities (merging agricultural, business and life skills) with business development support, group cooperation and access to markets. It is also gender sensitive in order to encourage young women to partake in and gain access to the agro sector. Working in groups is an important part of the methodology.
	Carry out training of trainers on youth employment for ministries of agriculture and labour, local government authorities and farmer's organizations. Training materials can be adapted to local needs and translated in local languages. (S)
	Carry out JFFLS with selected youth beneficiaries (direct training of youth at the township level). During their initial trainings, carry out a survey on their preferences and patterns in terms of e.g. business activities, preferred products, access and use of credit, land property, climate variability adaptation and/or strategies, cooperative work, value addition/processing, gender, migration, perception of agriculture as a prospective source of employment.
	Pilot this model in selected townships of 2 regions/states (focus on 2/3 local economic areas within a region/state) (S)
	Upscale to other townships within the regions/states or to other regions/states based on evaluation and lessons learnt (L)
Linkages to public and private stakeholders	Create a network of public and private stakeholders to support the implementation of the pilot
	Engage public sector (Agriculture, Labour, Vocational Training, etc.): facilitate access to land and inputs (S)
	Engage private sector (farmers' associations, federation, unions, MFI): guidance on crops, price and marketing issues, access to land, access to credit, linkages with suppliers, processors, traders, exporters. (S)
	Support the inclusion of youth in Farmers' Organizations (FOs) so they can benefit from their services (S/L)
	Support youth to design/apply affordable certification schemes. (L)
Enabling environment	Increase public awareness on "youth employment in agriculture" (knowledge products, guidance materials) (S)
	Identify mechanisms to increase the uptake of rural youth employment activities into national policies, programmes and strategies (S)

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	Develop a ‘roadmap’ for the elaboration of a national youth employment strategy, engaging agriculture and labour stakeholders, youth groups’ representatives, and in partnership with ILO (S). Develop a national youth employment strategy (L)
Potential partners	ILO, UNIDO
	Employment opportunities sector-working group (Creation of ‘youth employment cluster’ under this sector-working group, suggested by ILO)
Scope	Selection criteria for townships/State/regions may include: their agro-ecological and market potential for the selected priority commodity value chains; local youth unemployment levels, availability of interested private sector stakeholders and willingness to participate in the Programme, among others.
Expected cost	TBD (Cost is associated with the number / characteristics of townships selected and value chains selected at the stakeholders’ design workshop)

Intervention 4: Design and Implement Social Protection Schemes that Support Decent Rural Employment

Justification	<p>Social protection in Myanmar is very limited and health insurance is not available in the market. Pension schemes are directed to civil servants while the existing social security scheme covers only employees from the formal private sector in cases of sickness, maternity, employment injury and death. A few small-scale assistance programmes also exist mainly to support children’s access to school (Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Settlement, MoSWRR). In total, it is estimated that less than two million persons benefit from these schemes.</p> <p>Social protection and decent rural employment are interlinked and can reinforce and complement each other. Social protection initiatives contribute to reinforce resilience of poor rural population, improve human capital development and enable poor rural households to better manage risks and invest in productive activities. Social protection can also provide direct temporary jobs through public works programme, and improve opportunities for farm or non-farm employment.</p> <p>The ILO, as a member of the sector-working group on social protection (co-chaired by UNICEF and MoSWRR) engaged a national dialogue exercise with relevant stakeholders to assess social protection situation in Myanmar and draw policy recommendations to achieve a comprehensive social protection floor⁷. The sector-working group on social protection chaired by the Ministry of Social Welfare and UNICEF is facilitating a dialogue and providing inputs to develop a master plan for social protection and social protection floor. The World Bank and WFP are also part of this group.</p>
Objective	Reduce rural poverty through strengthening social protection systems, extending access to social protection in rural areas, especially for smallholders, fishermen, and agriculture wageworkers.
Suggested	Follow up on the opportunity for FAO to participate in the sector-

⁷See ILO Draft report- <http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/ShowProject.action?id=2487>

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activities/components	working group on social protection and contribute to the national dialogue on social protection floor.
	FAO has recently signed a LoA with the Lodestar Myanmar Company Limited (a social business, which started as a government-NGO consortium working closely with the Ministry of social affairs). One of the objectives of this agreement is to gain insight in to the needs and current access to/availability of social protection at community level, in order to inform the development of social protection programmes in the context of sustainable rural development. Special attention will be given to fisheries-dependent communities. The results of the study should be available end March/early April and presented in a national workshop in Yangon.
	The results of this study should be used to develop a social protection programme under the NAPA. FAO's experience with the Protection to Production project implemented in Africa with UNICEF can also be used as guidance to develop social protection schemes for very poor and labour constrained households.
Examples of interventions	<p>Workshop to raise awareness on the linkages between social protection and DRE and to share successful experiences from other countries;</p> <p>Targeted public work programmes that:</p> <p>Include skills development and access to health care (successful experience in India with the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme)</p> <p>Integrate OSH components to improve working conditions</p> <p>Ensure adequate level of wages (and equal pay for men and women)</p> <p>Targeted conditional cash transfer programmes to support children's education, or provision of inputs or livestock in combination with skills development activities;</p> <p>Establishment of micro-insurance schemes with MFI against sickness, injury, unemployment, natural disasters/loss of harvest, etc.</p>
Potential partners	<p>ILO, UNICEF</p> <p>National technical working group on social protection</p>
Scope	National – geographical focus based on levels of poverty, vulnerability (e.g. hilly regions, CDZ, fishers, minorities)
Expected cost	TBD