

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



ASSET CREATION & LIVELIHOODS

WFP Myanmar

Context

Currently in the process of significant political and socioeconomic transition, Myanmar has the highest rate of poverty in Southeast Asia with 25.6 percent of the country's population living below the national poverty line.

According to UNDP's 2018 Human Development Report, Myanmar ranked 148th out of 189 countries, well below the regional average. Almost 70 percent of the population lives in rural areas and subsists on agricultural production.

Myanmar is highly susceptible to natural disasters such as cyclones, floods, earthquakes and landslides. In addition, ethnic armed conflicts and inter-communal violence in the northeastern, southeastern and western parts of the country have displaced hundreds of thousands of civilians, losing their homes and livelihood assets. Many of these conflict-affected populations remain vulnerable to disaster risks and food insecurity and rely heavily on humanitarian assistance.

WFP's Response

WFP's Asset Creation and Livelihoods (ACL) programme empowers marginalized and vulnerable population groups to invest in their own livelihoods and communities. The ACL programme implements projects to build or recover community-owned assets that impact positively on the food security of communities in the most vulnerable areas. Along with the construction of household and community assets that reduce disaster risk and build resilience, participation in the programme allows beneficiaries to receive temporary employment and food or cash assistance to address their food consumption gaps.

Since 1994, WFP has enabled returnees and vulnerable communities in northern Rakhine

State to rehabilitate dams, roads, canals, and schools. Following the Government's poppy eradication programme in 2003, WFP expanded its ACL programme to ex-poppy farmers in KoKang and Wa to assist in the establishment of alternative livelihoods. Since then, ACL activities have been implemented in other areas, such as the Central Dry Zone, Chin, Kachin, Mon, Sagaing, Shan and Rakhine.

WFP's Country Strategic Plan 2018-2022 introduced a strategic shift to nutrition-sensitive activities, integrating nutrition education into WFP projects with the aim of fostering a gradual transition from humanitarian assistance to resilience and self-sufficiency. Integrated into WFP's school meals programme, the ACL programme establishes school gardens to supply fresh produce for school meals. Nutrition messaging and training is also emphasized as one of the key project components, targeting both male and female participants.

BENEFICIARIES IN 2018

Regions	Beneficiaries
Chin State	8,100
Magwe Region	8,900
Kayah State	3,800
Kayin State	3,900
Sagaing Region (Nagaland)	13,900
Shan State	2,000
Shan State (Wa region)	10,900
Rakhine State	66,200
Total	117,700



Photo : A WFP-supported pond development project in central Rakhine State

Project Activities

ACL initiatives vary based on community needs and feasibility.

- Land development projects offer an alternative to slash and burn practices, reducing soil erosion and deforestation and allowing landless labourers to grow crops.
- Soil conservation projects increase the productivity of smallholder farmers. Mini dam and irrigation canal projects allow the cultivation of winter crops and summer paddy, improving food security in the communities.
- Rehabilitation of water supply projects empower women and children by reducing the time spent fetching water.
- Disaster risk reduction activities improve community safety through projects such as land slide protection and dike construction.
- Road rehabilitation repairs infrastructure destroyed by natural disasters and creates new roads in vulnerable areas, promoting access to markets and social services.
- Home Gardening improves access to nutritious and diverse food for those in need.

Throughout implementation, WFP provides food or cash to project participants as compensation for their daily work. Upon completion, the assets created are solely owned and managed by the community. WFP conducts follow-up assessments at project sites in the post-completion period to ensure the benefits are shared fairly among the community members and to encourage effective maintenance of the created/rehabilitated assets.

ACL Strategies

In its operational areas, WFP has developed context-based, area-specific ACL strategies to address acute and chronic needs and to support sustainable food production. The strategies are informed by WFP's Food Security Monitoring findings which are used to select project participants on the household and village levels. To identify the project type, WFP conducts feasibility and technical field assessments in close coordination with community members and local authorities, using corporate tools such as the Community-based Participatory Planning approach and Seasonal Livelihoods Programming.

Project Management Committees

WFP puts community participation at the forefront of its ACL strategy. With technical assistance from WFP and its cooperating partners, community members in target areas form Project Management Committees. Members of the committees participate in needs assessments, prioritization, design, and implementation of projects. The committees encourage equal participation and decision-making by men and women; adapt the programmes to different needs; and give equal pay for equal work.

Wages

Beneficiaries receive food or cash compensation proportionate to the average amount of daily work. In Food for Assets projects, participants receive 2.6 kg of rice, 0.45 kg of pulses, 0.2 kg of oil, and 0.025 g of salt per working day. In Cash for Assets projects, beneficiaries employed in areas with safe, functional, and accessible markets receive compensation equal to the price of a local food basket. Cash transfers help WFP save time and transport costs, stimulate the local economy, and empower beneficiaries to choose how to utilize their cash assistance, while also helping beneficiaries bridge food gaps and diversify their food basket.

Partnerships

International and local partnerships enable WFP to empower communities in the creation and restoration of assets, improving food security and socioeconomic opportunities for the most vulnerable groups. Partner organizations provide budget contributions, knowledge of local context, and expertise in community participation, agriculture, and engineering.

The Road Ahead

The ACL Programme is designed in line with WFP's Country Strategic Plan 2018-2022, the Government's Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

In coordination with the Government of Myanmar at both national and local levels, UN agencies, civil society, and INGOs/NGOs, WFP aims for its ACL Programme to bolster the ultimate goal of its Country Strategic Plan – to deliver a transition from crisis response humanitarian assistance to resilience-building focused on livelihoods and supporting recovery.

