

FAO Myanmar Newsletter

Message from FAO Representative

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Dear Readers,

Welcome to the first FAO Myanmar newsletter of 2019!

In 2019, FAO will continue its strong support to the Government of Myanmar and its people. At the start of the year, the new Country Programming Framework (CPF) for Myanmar outlining the priority areas of FAO support to and partnership with the Government for a six-year period was signed. FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Asia and Pacific joined the CPF signing ceremony as well as observed the on-ground situation of FAO projects in the country.

With the new framework of partnership, FAO will extend its assistance to the Government to achieve three main goals. The first is enhanced food security, nutrition and food safety. The second is strengthened governance and sustainable management of land, forests, water resources and ecosystems. The third relates to enhanced resilience of local communities and farming households to natural and humanitarian

disasters, climate change and transboundary and emerging infectious disease risks. The achievement of these three goals will be closely linked to our support in the accomplishment of the Government's strategies such as: the Multi-sectoral National Plan of Action for Nutrition (MS-NPAN), the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) and the Myanmar Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction (MAPDRR). Through all the efforts that are being put in place, FAO aspires to see economic growth and political stability in Myanmar.

FAO Myanmar remains committed to contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the country more specifically, the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan through a strong collaboration with the Government counterparts, donors, and development and humanitarian partners.

I wish you all a happy Myanmar New Year!
Enjoy reading our Newsletter!



Xiaojie Fan
FAO Representative in Myanmar

Extending strong support to the Government of Myanmar and its people through implementation of FAO Myanmar Country Programming Framework (2017-2022)



The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (GORUM) and the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) signed a multi-year framework that creates an enabling environment to improve nutrition and food security in Myanmar, while safeguarding and sustainably managing the use of natural resources. The Myanmar Country Programming Framework (CPF) outlines the priority areas of FAO support to and partnership with the GORUM until 2022.

The CPF was signed by Ms Xiaojie Fan, FAO Representative in Myanmar and U Than Aung Kyaw, Director General, the Foreign Economic Relations Department of the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations (MIFER) in Nay Pyi Taw on the 19th of February. The signing was witnessed by Ms Kundhavi Kadiresan, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific, and H.E U Set Aung, Deputy Minister for the Ministry of Planning and Finance (MOPF). The event was attended by the Deputy Ministers from the Ministry of Health and Sports, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, and the Ministry of Commerce, other senior Government officials, officials, the United Nations Resident Coordinator, UN colleagues and other stakeholders.

The CPF intends to support the Government achieving three primary goals: 1) enhance food security, nutrition and food safety; 2) strengthen governance and sustainable management of land, forests, water resources and ecosystems; and 3) enhance resilience of local communities and farming households to natural and humanitarian disasters, climate change and transboundary and emerging infectious disease risks.

This was the second CPF signed between FAO and the GORUM since FAO Representation Office was established in 1978. For over 40 years, FAO Myanmar has been working in the areas of improved food security and nutrition, agriculture and crop production, livestock, fisheries and forestry. The Organization has also been helping to build resilience and reduce risks from environmental disasters and intervening when asked, to respond to outbreaks of diseases in livestock.



"With nearly one child in three stunted, much work remains to be done for Myanmar to achieve SDG 2, the Sustainable Development Goal of Zero Hunger by 2030. But the fact that the Government of Myanmar and FAO have produced and published this comprehensive framework sets us on a clear path forward. FAO is ready to do its part to help." - Ms Kundhavi Kadiresan, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific

FAO ADG visit to Myanmar included interacting with farmers in the field

Ms Kundhavi Kadiresan, FAO's Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific, visited Myanmar from the 18th to the 22nd of February.

On 19 February, Ms Kadiresan attended the signing ceremony of the FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF) for Myanmar with four Deputy Ministers from the Ministry of Planning and Finance, the Ministry of Health and Sports, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and the Ministry of Commerce. The ceremony was also attended by other senior government officials, the UN Resident Coordinator and UN colleagues as well as other stakeholders.



Ms Kadiresan delivered opening remark of CPF Signing Ceremony.

Ms Kadiresan had also high-level meetings with the Union Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI) and the Union Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MoNREC). "I was very pleased to have constructive discussions with MoALI and MoNREC Ministers on some of the priority areas for the development of the country," she said.



While in Nay Pyi Taw, Ms Kadiresan visited the Climate-Smart Agriculture Center established under the SLM-GEF Project funded by GEF at Yezin Agriculture University and also learnt about the labs operations and the use of equipments supported by the FAO TCP project at the Forest Research Institute. Moreover, she was offered a demonstration of FAO-donated drone flying and drone mapping exercise done by the MoALI's drone team – established and trained by a Japanese-funded FAO project in 2017.

Ms Kadiresan visited some FAO project sites in the Central Dry Zone including a Farmer Field School of the SLM-GEF project in Nyaung U. She also participated in the seed distribution and discussed with the project beneficiaries. In Pakokku, she visited the sites of the FAO livestock project funded by LIFT, met the beneficiaries and learnt how the project has been supporting them.

Strengthening Myanmar's preparedness, prevention and detection measures for African Swine Fever (ASF)

African swine fever (ASF) is a viral disease that usually kills infected pigs. There is no treatment and no vaccine. Where it occurs, pig production and farm livelihoods are seriously impacted. With recently reported ASF outbreaks in China, Mongolia and Viet Nam, Myanmar is currently in the alert phase with high risk of ASF introduction. In this regard, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI) requested support from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Emergency Management Centre for Animal Health (EMC-AH). An EMC mission was quickly deployed from 25 February to 04 March to strengthen the country's preparedness, prevention and detection measures for ASF.

FAO, World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department (LBVD) of MOALI jointly conducted the mission. The international team worked closely with LBVD and provided recommendations on the mitigation of risks of ASF entry and spread, strengthening policy, sanitary measures and laboratory veterinary diagnostic capacity. In addition, it provided relevant training to field veterinarians.

The team travelled to Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw to assess the on-the-ground situation in the field and evaluate the capacity of the laboratories. In meetings with LBVD officials in the high-risk border areas the mission received valuable information about the pig value chain and associated disease transmission risks. The mission brought together experts in ASF, emergency management, veterinary laboratory diagnostics, epidemiology in the region, and others.

During the mission the team gave ASF preparedness training to some 80 veterinarians, animal health workers and representatives of the private sector. Training included lessons learned from previous ASF



The EMC-AH Team Leader, Dr Lee Myers, presents the FAO ASF Detection and Diagnosis manual to MOALI Permanent Secretary, Dr Khin Zaw.

outbreaks in Europe and China, actions Myanmar can take now during the alert phase of the disease, the ASF situation in the region, border control, farm biosecurity best practices, ASF clinical signs, disease surveillance, sample collection, laboratory testing and field investigation. This mission underlined the importance of protecting animal health, farm livelihoods and food security and FAO's extended support to the Myanmar Government. To enhance its ASF preparedness efforts, the Government will receive a report with clear recommendations for the short-term and longer-term future disease prevention and control priorities. EMC will follow up after six and 12 months. The FAO Emergency Management Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) in Myanmar will implement two regional projects with the Government to help implement these recommendations.

FAO's 40+ years of contribution to forest researchers to strengthen capacities continues



Union Minister of MoNREC observed the renovated lab of FRI.

Established in 1978 with FAO support, the Forest Research Institute (FRI) is currently playing a significant role in supporting sustainable forest management through disseminating up-to-date information and scientific research papers, providing techniques for various forestry operations, and assisting the capacity building of staff, private sector and local communities.

Through the "Strengthening Capacity and Upgrading the Forest Research Institute, Yezin" project, FAO further supported the FRI in 2006-2007. Under this project, FAO supported FRI in upgrading its status as an institution and in strengthening its capacities. The recommended actions and policy measures for research development from this 2006-2007 project were implemented via the "Strengthening Capacity of Forest Research Institute, Myanmar" Project. The project was implemented in cooperation with the FRI and the Forest Department of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MoNREC) since June 2017.

Through this project, the capacity of forest researchers was improved by the provision of in-country and overseas trainings conducted by experts from India, from the Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI), the Institute of Wood Science and Technology, and



Water Distillation Unit for Wood Chemistry in the lab.

the Wildlife Institute of India. Moreover, three scientists of FRI were deputed to India to gain exposure with the modern techniques in the field of plant pathology, wood seasoning and wood preservation, timber physics and timber mechanics. FAO has also renovated the labs and provided the necessary equipment for the training programs and researches. One of the most significant achievements was the formulation of comprehensive Business Plan which will guide the institution to continue improving its capacity and to conduct the long-term development.

With over 40 years of collaboration, FAO supported FRI in assessing and identifying the capacity gaps, strengthening the capacity to address priority forest research needs in the country, and conducting quality research in forestry, for the benefits of all stakeholders and the country in a wider context. In terms of further collaboration, it is foreseen that through the UN-REDD programme, FAO will continue facilitating the FRI in developing individual and institutional capacity, upgrading research infrastructure and facilities, promoting international cooperation and networking as well as fulfilling Forest Policy (1995) Measures, Strategies and Actions.

Development of Climate-Smart Agriculture Curricula for Academic Courses and Training Programmes

FAO has been implementing the "Sustainable Cropland and Forest Management in Priority Agro-ecosystems of Myanmar" project (GCP/MYA/017/GFF) which facilitates the adoption of Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) policies and practices that help to sustainably increase productivity, enhance resilience, reduce/remove greenhouse gases emission and improve achievement of national food security and development goals.

With the purpose of mainstreaming CSA in the agriculture research, extension, academic courses and training programs conducted by Department of Agriculture (DoA), Department of Agriculture Research (DAR), Yezin Agriculture University (YAU) and State Agricultural Institutes (SAIs), the project revised and developed the curricula for academic courses and training programmes integrating CSA topics in: i) Masters and Bachelor level courses on Agriculture at YAU; ii) Diploma in Agriculture course at SAIs; iii) one-month in-service or refresher training course at Central Agriculture Research and Training Centre (CARTC) under DoA; and iv) one-week intensive Training of Trainers (ToT) curriculum aiming for the researchers, extension agents and teachers of DoA, DAR, YAU and SAIs.

In addition and still in collaboration with AVSI Foundation, a CSA handbook (in Myanmar and English languages) was developed. DoA, YAU and SAIs have already taken the ownership of those documents and have made the commitment to use them in the academic courses and training programme from 2019 onwards. The CSA curricula and handbook will help the researchers, extension agents, teachers and farmers to teach, learn and promote CSA techniques and practices in Myanmar.

"CSA Curricula and Handbooks" developed by FAO will help the researchers, extension agents, teachers and farmers to teach, learn and promote CSA techniques and practices in Myanmar.



Launching the National Livestock Baseline Survey result of Myanmar

In Myanmar, the livestock sector is very dynamic with demand for livestock products increasing in the context of increasing populations, increasing economic activity, and increased urbanization of the country and region. The full potential of the sector can only be reached with improved government policies and actions.

Contributing to policy and investment planning in the livestock sector through providing basic data on the current populations and ownership of the livestock in the country, FAO conducted the National Livestock Baseline Survey (NLBS) in Myanmar under the LIFT-funded "Improving farmer livelihoods in the dry zone through improved livestock health, productivity and marketing" project since January 2018.

Led by Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department (LBVD), with the technical support of FAO, the NLBS represents analysis of data collected over 1.57 million households in from 12,804 villages and wards in 289 townships and over 10,000 large farms. As a part of technical assistance, FAO trained LBVD staff from all over the country on data collection and management processes, including use of tablets for data management. This had the great advantage of involving LBVD staff who will ultimately be the main users of the data for policy purposes, and be responsible for communicating information to private sector and other stakeholders.



Dr Aung Thu, Union Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation delivered the opening remark of launching National Livestock Baseline Survey result.

The NLBS data was launched in Nay Pyi Taw on the 10th of January in the presence of the Union Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI), Director Generals and senior officials from MoALI and related stakeholders. During the ceremony, it was stressed how the experience of the NLBS can contribute to the planning of the 2020 Agriculture census. It was also noted that the FAO project in collaboration with LBVD has demonstrated the utilization of the data for policy making, and in engaging with the private sector.

Reflection from FAO Myanmar Team



"I recently joined FAO Myanmar as Emergency Coordinator. The Myanmar emergency program consists of a series of peace building and conflict sensitive multi-sectoral projects that link humanitarian interventions with crisis response and development. The projects designed and implemented focus on mainstreaming disaster risk reduction, improving agricultural productivity, food and nutrition security, reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience.

I am honored to have the opportunity to work with such a dedicated and professional team of experts from various sectors within the FAO Representation. The context in which we operate here in Myanmar is particularly challenging. Yet through our program, we have a valuable opportunity to build local capacity and substantively contribute to the livelihoods of poor agricultural households in the most fragile parts of the country".

- Mr. Reda Lebtahi, FAO Myanmar Emergency Coordinator

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Upcoming Events (April-June)

- » Community Animal Health Worker Training and Accreditation and Investment Planning
- » Workshops on Biosecurity Practices and One Health Approach for Farmers, Feed Sellers and Egg Collectors
- » Water Accounting and Auditing Training
- » MyCoast Project Validation Workshop
- » Capacity Building Training on Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management, Ecosystem Approach to Aquaculture in pilot communities
- » 8th Round Risk Based Surveillance of HPAI and LPAI in Targeted Border Townships and Live Bird Markets in Yangon and Mandalay
- » Stakeholder consultation workshop on the Rakhine State AAPDRR