



FAO Myanmar Newsletter

Message from FAO Representative

Dear Readers,

Happy Thadingyut and welcome to the third issue of FAO Myanmar newsletter in 2018 featuring the most prominent activities of FAO in Myanmar for the recent quarter!

During the previous quarter, FAO continued pursuing to reach its sustainable development goals through the strong collaboration with the government and resource partners. Recognizing the relatively large, productive, and ecologically intact coastal zone of Myanmar and understanding the requirement of conservation on this valuable ecosystem, FAO's EAF-Nansen Programme, with the visit of the Research vessel *Dr Fridtjof Nansen*, conducted a survey on the fisheries resources and marine ecosystem of Myanmar.

Myanmar is facing the global challenge of having enough quality food for the total population and is also vulnerable to serious natural disasters that negatively affect food security. As a contribution of fighting against this challenge, FAO started off a regional project on the Nutrition Sensitive Food and Agriculture that will implement "Zero Hunger Challenge" in Myanmar.

Increasing and improving the provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries is very important and essential

The Nansen Research Vessel surveys in coastal areas of Myanmar

The most advanced research vessel in the world - *Dr Fridtjof Nansen* - undertook a survey on fisheries resources and the marine ecosystem of Myanmar as part of FAO's "Supporting the Application of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries management considering climate and pollution impacts" Programme ("EAF-Nansen Programme").

The EAF-Nansen Programme is implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) with the financial support of the Norwegian Government. The research vessel *Dr Fridtjof Nansen* is owned by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) and is jointly operated by the Norwegian Institute of Marine Research (IMR) and FAO. To conduct the survey in Myanmar, FAO signed an agreement with the Department of Fisheries of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Myanmar, on 21 February 2018.

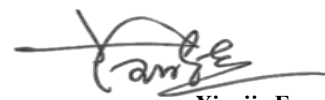
National scientists from different universities, marine experts from the Department of Fisheries, and researchers from the Myanmar Navy participated in the research vessel's survey, which was carried out in the coastal areas of Rakhine State, Ayeyawady Region and Taninthayi Region from the 24th of August to the 28th of September 2018.

Since the beginning of the EAF-Nansen Programme in May 2017, around 350 researchers from participating countries, have taken part in the ecosystem studies on-board of the research vessels. This has provided local scientists and technicians with valuable experience in data collection and sampling methods. In many countries, the Nansen surveys offer the only credible source of fishery-independent data for stock assessment. The survey findings are expected to be used to provide decision-makers with fisheries management advices, which takes into account the climate impact and pollution.

for Myanmar's sustainable development. The newly-launched project of FAO at the Forest Research Institute will improve research capacity and knowledge for sustainable management of natural forests, which in turn, will enhance productivity of forest plantations and restoration of degraded forests and landscapes. Likewise, opening the "National Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) Centre" will also help farming and forestry stakeholders in building capacity to mitigate climate change and improve land condition. At the same time, FAO is supporting the students from University of Veterinary Science in the area of socio-economics through field surveys as a support of providing graduates to work in rapidly growing livestock sector of Myanmar.

FAO Myanmar remains committed to enhance resilience of vulnerable communities through restoring, protecting and improving livelihood opportunities. FAO is implementing a HARP (DFID)-funded project in northern Rakhine State for the local communities affected by the conflicts in 2017. The facilitation of FAO during the observatory visit of British Ambassador to these project sites is one of the highlights of this quarter.

Enjoy reading our Newsletter!



Xiaojie Fan
FAO Representative in Myanmar



(Large Photo) Group photo of Union Ministers, Yangon Region Chief Minister, Norwegian Ambassador, FAO Myanmar Representative, Government officials, Representatives of UN agencies and embassies in front of the vessel. (Small Photo) R/V Dr Fridtjof Nansen

In order to mark the survey activities in the Bay of Bengal, and to welcome the *Dr Fridtjof Nansen* research vessel in Myanmar, FAO and the Royal Norwegian Embassy, in collaboration with the Department of Fisheries of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, organized a port call event. The event was held on board of the vessel at Myanmar Industrial Port, Yangon on the 12th of September 2018.

"In Myanmar, fishery sector is vital for national food security, income generation of the people and export earnings of the nation. I would like to request Excellency Madam Tone Tinnes (Representative of the Government of Norway) and Madam Xiaojie Fan (Representative of FAO) to consider the fishery sector as a priority by immediate, short term and long term cooperation to strengthen fishery management and rebuild the marine fish stocks in Myanmar."

H.E. Dr. Aung Thu, Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI)

Challenging to the end of hunger



Neglected and Underutilized Species (NUS) in Myingyan

Among the great challenges the world faces is how to ensure that a growing global population has enough quality food to meet their nutritional needs for a healthy life. There is more than enough food produced today to feed everyone, yet about 815 million people are chronically undernourished, and malnutrition affects around one in three people on the planet. Addressing this is part of FAO's core mandate, setting a specific Strategic Objective to achieve "Zero Hunger: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture".

In Myanmar, significant improvements in the fight against hunger was achieved in recent decades, reducing stunting rates from 40% in 1990 to 29.2% in 2016. However, more than 25% of the population still live in poverty while spending high percentage of their limited income on food. Furthermore, Myanmar is vulnerable to natural disasters and conflicts that negatively affect food security. One major factor for hunger and malnutrition is the lack of diversification and concentration on a few staple crops.

Against this backdrop, the Government of Myanmar has committed

Building the Capacities to Preserve the Forests in Myanmar

Increasing and improving provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner is one of the five Strategic Objectives of FAO. As an effort of implementing this Strategic Objective in Myanmar, FAO funded through its own resources the recently launched project "Capacity Building Training Program – Strengthening Capacity of Forest Research Institute, Myanmar" under the FAO. The project is being implemented by FAO in cooperation with the Forest Research Institute (FRI) under the Forest Department of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MoNREC).

The project aims to capacitate FRI to carry out high-quality research in forestry which will contribute to the welfare of the forests in Myanmar. The projects' contributions will specifically focus on achieving improved research capacity and knowledge for sustainable management of natural forests, as well as enhance productivity of forest plantations and the restoration of degraded forests and landscapes. It is expected that the project will impart the capacity and knowledge to the next generation of researchers who will guide the research programs of FRI in the future. The improved visibility of FRI through enhanced research outputs will help to attract additional grants from the Government as well as national and international donors to sustain and further improve research activities.

Under this project, 15 capacity building trainings will be provided in an array of research fields to the FRI research officers by experts from India, Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI), Institute of Wood

to reducing stunting from 29% to 21% by 2025, as elaborated in its draft Multi Sector National Action Plan for Nutrition. The EU-FAO Policy Facility called FIRST has been supporting MoALI over the past year to help articulate its contribution to the reduction of malnutrition, in convergence with three other Ministries (MoSWRR, MoE and MoHS). Diversification for improved resilience, availability and accessibility to diverse food and income generation is at the heart of this strategy and the cornerstone of the sector's recently launched Agriculture Development Strategy.

In view of the above, FAO Regional Office initiated the project "Creating Enabling Environments for Nutrition-sensitive Food and Agriculture to Address Malnutrition" to implement the "Zero Hunger Challenge" in four countries: Lao, Cambodia, Nepal and Myanmar. The aim is to contribute to i) the national crop diversification strategies, generating additional income and improving livelihoods of vulnerable farmers, ii) the national policy/strategy recommendations on a multi-dimensional enabling environment for nutrition-sensitive food and agriculture. The main theme of this project is the Neglected and Underutilized Species (NUS) that are nutrition-dense, climate-resilient, economically viable and locally available or adaptable and considered as Future Smart Food.

In order to implement the project's activities in Myanmar, an Inception Workshop was held in Nay Pyi Taw the 2nd August 2018. Discussions took place regarding hunger and malnutrition in Myanmar, the identification of agriculture, genetic resources and climate change challenges and opportunities, national policy, regulations, laws and institutions covering the entire food value chain and finally the Neglected and Underutilized Species (NUS).

The publication "Future Smart Food: Rediscovering Hidden Treasures of Neglected and Underutilized Species for Zero Hunger in Asia" was also launched at the workshop.



Capacity Building Training at FRI.

Science and Technology, and Wildlife Institute of India. In addition to the trainings in Myanmar, some of the scientists of FRI will visit the Kerala Forest Research Institute and the Institute of Wood Science and Technology in India to gain exposure with the modern techniques in the field of forest research.

The project will also provide equipment to the FRI laboratories which will strongly contribute to the improvement of the Institute efficiency.

To kick off the training programme, an opening ceremony was held at the Auditorium Hall of FRI, in Yezin University in Nay Pyi Taw on the 16th of July 2018. Opening remarks were done by Mr Franz Eugen Arnold, FAO Myanmar Chief Technical Advisor and U Zaw Min, Deputy Director General of the Forest Department. Officials from the Forest Department, Forest Research Institute, Dry Zone Greening Department, Myanmar Timber Enterprise, Private Forest Plantation Companies and researchers as well as representatives from other partners working in Myanmar have also participated at the event.

Supporting youth for the future of Agriculture sector

FAO has a strong commitment to supporting educate students who will help develop the agriculture sector of Myanmar in the future.

With this in mind, FAO, through the LIFT-funded “Improving Farmer Livelihoods in the Dry Zone through Improved Livestock Health, Productivity and Marketing” Project is building knowledge and skills of Animal Science students in socio-economics and field surveys.

In July 2018, with project support, 100 students from University of Veterinary Science (UVS) conducted individual interviews with 245 households and focus group meetings across six villages in Mahlaing Township in Mandalay Region, together with UVS teachers, and Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department (LBVD) staff. This activity is part of the long-term engagement that the project has had with UVS which has seen over 1,000 UVS students already getting experience in field surveys over the last three years.

The students were curious about the household sources of income, loans, expenditures, and investments, with an emphasis on household land, livestock assets and income, as well as the problems and opportunities of the households for increasing incomes. In so doing, students learned about survey techniques, and data management and analysis, which will be useful skills in their future careers. In the field, students also learnt how to estimate livestock weights and asset value. While in the village, students conducted extension activities on basic health care such as animal vaccination and feeding. Animal Science students are most likely to be destined in working as extension agents or farm

Animal Science students are most likely to be destined in working as extension agents or farm managers, so understanding of socio-economics is a critical part of their education.



Students learning livestock weighing system.

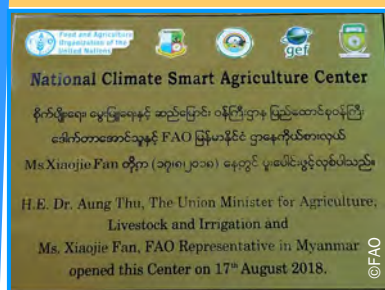
managers, so understanding of socio-economics is a critical part of their education. This group of students will be the first graduates of the new Animal Science course, which adds to the well-established veterinary science course that UVS has managed for many years.

“The training of students on socio-economics is new to UVS and has so far proved very popular amongst both students and staff.” said Murray Maclean, FAO Chief Technical Advisor.

The training has proved so popular that now UVS is considering to include such topics in their core curriculum. At the same time, the field survey provided very useful data on the relative role that livestock play in household livelihoods.

The livestock sector is growing rapidly with increased demand for livestock products such as meat, milk and eggs both domestically and in the region. The Animal Science course is well situated to provide graduates to work in this area, and the field trips and training provided by the FAO-LIFT project are making a solid contribution to this goal.

Launching of National Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) Centre



Brass plate of CSA Centre

The first Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) Centre at Yezin Agriculture University (YAU) in Myanmar was inaugurated by H.E. Dr Aung Thu, Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI) and Ms Xiaojie Fan, FAO Representative in Myanmar on 17th August 2018.

Director Generals and senior officials of concerned departments of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MoNREC) and MoALI, influential Members of Parliament, Chair of National Education Policy Commission and rectors of different universities attended the opening.

During the inauguration ceremony, H.E. Union Minister stressed the vulnerability situation of the country from the impact of climate change. According to MoALI, Myanmar is highly vulnerable to climate change and extreme weather conditions ranking among the top three countries most affected by weather related events. This has led to massive displacement of people, destruction of livelihoods and impacting agricultural production negatively which potentially can lead to food insecurity.

Reflecting this situation, H.E. Union Minister mentioned the importance of CSA Centre in promoting and upscaling best CSA techniques and practices to achieve sustainable goal for sustainably increasing agricultural productivity and incomes, adapting and building resilience to climate change and reducing and/or removing



CSA Centre was inaugurated by H.E. Dr Aung Thu and Ms Xiaojie Fan.

greenhouse gas emissions.

The CSA Centre will be responsible to i) develop and document best practices for CSA information and technologies, ii) disseminate knowledge on CSA and sustainable land management (SLM) technologies and practices, and iii) conduct advocacy activities related to CSA/SLM and climate.

The CSA Center was established in the context of a Global Environment Facility (GEF) project implemented by FAO entitled “Sustainable cropland and forest management in priority agro-ecosystem of Myanmar” in collaboration with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MoNREC) and MoALI. The project aims to build the capacity of farming and forestry stakeholders to mitigate climate change and improve land condition by adopting climate-smart agriculture (CSA), sustainable forest management (SFM) and sustainable land management (SLM) policies and practices. It is also foreseen that during the project implementation FAO will support the operationalization of the CSA Centre.

Contributing in the rehabilitation of conflict affected people in Northern Rakhine State

FAO Myanmar has been implementing humanitarian and recovery interventions aiming at increasing the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crisis adhering to its organizational outcomes and to the priority areas stated in FAO Myanmar's Country Programming Framework (CPF) 2017-2022.

The project "Enhancing food security conditions of vulnerable communities in Northern part of Rakhine State" funded by the Humanitarian Assistance and Resilience Programme Facility (HARP)/the Department of International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom, represents one of FAO's interventions addressing the needs of farmers in Northern Rakhine State.

While most humanitarian agents active in Northern Rakhine State are focusing on the provision of food assistance to address the most immediate food necessities of the population, FAO is supporting local agricultural production to strengthened food production capacities thus reducing the need for food assistance. In this sense 4,000 vulnerable households benefitted from paddy seeds, vegetable seeds and fertilizer through FAO's partnership with the national NGO Myanmar Heart Development Organization (MHDO) and the Rakhine State Department of Agriculture (DoA). Moreover, the project provides technical training to MHDO NGO field staff and to the Department of Agriculture Extensionists to deliver food security and agriculture assistance to communities addressed by the project.



H.E. Mr Daniel Chugg (middle) and the FAO team at the project site in Rakhine.

H.E. Mr Daniel Chugg, Ambassador of Her Britannic Majesty's Embassy in Myanmar, visited the project sites in Buthidaung and Maungdaw Townships in order to identify potential collaboration in the education, economic and private sector in Northern Rakhine State, Ms Xiaojie Fan, FAO Representative in Myanmar, and Mr Andrea Berloff, Senior Resilience Officer of FAO, accompanied the Ambassador and facilitated the field visit. The delegation visited some of the villages addressed by FAO intervention, interacted with the beneficiaries and attended a training session on good agriculture practices conducted by the MHDO NGO and the Department of Agriculture Extensionists.

Since the start of the current humanitarian crises in August 2017, FAO has been able to reach almost 13,000 households or 69,700 people with its emergency assistance. FAO activities in such context considers mainly the distribution of agriculture inputs as seed and fertilizer, livestock for restocking purposes as well as the provision of technical trainings to the beneficiaries to maximize the impact on the production.

Reflection from FAO Myanmar Team



"I joined FAO Myanmar on 5 August as the Senior Technical Advisor for a GEF project on Sustainable Cropland and Forest Management in Priority Agro Ecosystems of Myanmar. This five-year project (2016-2021) is funded by Global Environment Facility (GEF) and being jointly coordinated and implemented by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MoNREC) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation (MoALI), and FAO-Myanmar (FAO-MM). I am glad to lead this project and coordinate with all stakeholders, contribute to what is a global effort on climate change and be able to work again in Myanmar, a country I am still learning to discover and appreciate."

Mr Xavier Bouan, Senior Technical Advisor (SLM-GEF Project)

Highlighted Events and Partnerships

- » 6 August 2018, Training on Capacity Building of Lab staff from YGN and MDY Diagnostic labs on poultry diseases
- » 16 August 2018, Land Use and Land Cover Mapping Task Force Meeting
- » 21-26 August 2018, Rapid Flood Assessment Missions in Bago Region, Mon State and Kayin State
- » 24-28 August 2018, Survey on Neglected and Underutilized Species (NUS) in Myingyan Township
- » 24 August 2018, National Climate Smart Agriculture Workshop on "Promoting CSA in Myanmar"
- » 28 August 2018, Project Preparation Grant Inception Workshop on "My-Coast: Ecosystem Based Conservation of Myanmar's Southern Coastal Zone" Project
- » 21 September 2018, Stakeholder Consultation on Live Cattle Export Trade
- » 25 September 2018, Signing ceremony of Global Agriculture and Food Security (GAFSP) Programme

Contact Us

FAO Representative in Myanmar
FAOR Building
Seed Division Compound (DoA)
Insein Road, Gyogon Yangon,
Myanmar
Mailing Address:
PO Box 101, Yangon
Tel: +95 1 641672
Fax: +95 1 641561
FAO-MM@fao.org
www.fao.org/myanmar

Upcoming Events

- » **October 2018**
World Food Day Celebration
Risk Communication National Strategy workshop for Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department (LBVD)
Data Collection and Management Workshop on Cattle Trade
Post-Harvest Training on the reduction of post-harvest losses along the Rice Production in Myanmar
- » **November 2018**
Launching of Global Agriculture and Food Security (GAFSP) Programme
VGGT Learning Programme (online-training and face-to-face workshop)
Community-level Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments for Fisheries (coastal and inland) and Aquaculture communities
- » **December 2018**
My-Coast Project Validation Workshop in Nay Pyi Taw and Taninthayi MRV group technical meetings for NFI planning and forest reference level development