



Fish for Livelihoods WorldFish Myanmar Nutrition Update

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From pond to nutritious plate- a story from the field

Daw Lay Lay Myint from Kyone Ywar village, Madaya Township, one of the participants of Fish for Livelihoods project funded by USAID shared the recent shift of consuming small indigenous fish among her family members.

"We didn't eat small fish prior to joining Fish for Livelihoods but when we read the pamphlet and heard from project staff that small fish is rich in protein, iron, calcium, and vitamin A and can help in gaining good nutrition, this consumption behavior was changed. From then on, we started eating small fish regularly; either fried or as a curry dish. My daughter is always reminding my husband to harvest small fish from our homestead ponds so we can have nutritious meals."

She mentioned that BRAC Myanmar and WorldFish field staff conducted training on Small Scale Aquaculture (SSA) technologies, basic nutrition and effective water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) practices in the village which helped reinforcing key messages that focused on changing old practices, and adopting and maintaining new behaviors.

She added that because fish is accessible from their homestead ponds, there is no need to spend money on purchasing animal source food from market which is usually unaffordable, thus, they are able to save money. In Myanmar, only four out of ten households can afford nutritious meals, which means that those who are unable to purchase has higher likelihood of micronutrient deficiencies¹.

Lastly, according to Daw Lay Lay Myint, because of the benefits she gained, she encourages others by sharing the pamphlets and talking about her experience on farming and consuming nutritious small indigenous fish species. She hopes that more people will adapt as she is a testament that it is possible to learn new behavior if you are open and willing to try.

Fish for Livelihoods activity promotes integrated farming system; fish polyculture farming and vegetable/fruit production on and around the dike of homestead ponds of project participants in Magway, Sagaing, Mandalay, Kachin, Eastern and Southern Shan. By the end of the project, it is expected that over 10,000 individuals have increased their income, improved nutrition and adopted effective WASH practices.

¹ World Food Programme. 2019. Fill the nutrient gap: Summary report. Myanmar: World Food Programme