

Danida in Myanmar

Providing development assistance to Myanmar is a top priority of the Danish Government's engagement in Southeast Asia.

Myanmar, ranked 149 out of 187 countries in the 2012 Human Development Index, is lagging behind its neighbors in most socio-economic indicators. It is the poorest country in South-East Asia after East Timor in terms of GDP per capita. Approximately a third of the population live below the poverty line and the number of poor is highest in the areas with ethnic conflicts. In addition, the prevalence of malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS is high, and there is a general lack of investment in education and healthcare. Although some Millennium Development Goal (MDG) indicators have improved it still seems unlikely that Myanmar can achieve more than a few of the MDGs by 2015.

Myanmar has, throughout history, suffered from the effects of natural disasters, civil war and political unrest. Due to the political situation in Myanmar, Danish development assistance has historically been focused on activities promoting democracy and human rights, which could be managed from outside the country. However, during the last two years the country has undergone a range of positive political changes, which have opened up new opportunities for providing development assistance to the country. On this background, Denmark increased its aid to Myanmar from approximately 8.5 million USD to approximately 14 million USD in 2012 and 18 million USD in 2013. In 2014, the Danish development assistance in the country is around 20 million USD.

Denmark supports a wide range of development activities in Myanmar conducted by Danish, international and local nongovernmental organisations as well as the United Nations. Danish development assistance to Myanmar is focused in four main areas: livelihood, health, education and human right, democracy and good governance.

Denmark is also providing humanitarian assistance to refugees from Myanmar seeking shelter in camps in Thailand and to some extent to internally displaced persons in south-eastern Myanmar, just across the border from Thailand. The humanitarian assistance is mainly administrated by the Department for Humanitarian Action, Development Policy and Civil Society (HUC) in Copenhagen. By focusing on the above areas, the Danish development assistance is supporting and contributing to the ongoing political reform process towards national reconciliation and a democratic society and improving the livelihoods of the Burmese people by alleviating the consequences of the previous regime's mismanagement of the country, especially in the social sector.

Danish development assistance to Myanmar takes place within the frame of EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy Act, which until recently imposed a number of restrictions on economic and development cooperation with the country. As a response to the positive political changes, the restrictions were temporarily suspended on the 21 April 2012. A temporary suspension of Canadian and American restrictions followed shortly after. On 22 April 2013, EU lifted all its sanctions against Myanmar, except the embargo on arms. The

removal of the restrictions has paved the way for a broader engagement with the Burmese government on political, economic and development cooperation. International development assistance is however still hampered by lack of access to parts of the country, especially the ethnic areas and along the borders due to conflicts between ethnic groups and the Burmese army.

The projects currently supported by Danida are divided into four groups:

1. Human Rights, Democracy and Good Governance 2. Education 3. Livelihoods 4. Health.

Human Rights, Democracy and Good Governance

Apart from a strong focus on immediate humanitarian needs, the development of Myanmar also calls for activities that support the people's capacity to change. These activities center on education as well as support to civil society and the promotion of human rights and democracy. Danida's support for capacity building in the field of human rights and democracy is aiming at increased transparency, local organisations, conciliation, poverty reduction, community strengthening and institution building.

Denmark is currently supporting several projects covering human rights, democracy and good governance. Below you can find a short description of the projects.

Project title: Myanmar Multi Donor Partnership Trust Fund (MMTF)

Project Duration: 1st December 2014 – 31st March 2019

Implementing Organisation: World Bank

Funds: 30,000,000 DKK

Project Description:

Through the Myanmar Multi Donor Partnership Trust Fund (MMTF) managed by the World Bank, Denmark's contribution will be earmarked for two projects: Modernization of Public Finance Management (MPFM) and Public Administration Performance (PAP) reforms. Both projects are interlinked in the objectives of supporting more efficient, effective, accountable and responsive service delivery to citizens in Myanmar, with a broader focus on reducing poverty and promoting shared prosperity. The projects support the objectives through a number of channels: (a) increasing revenue to combat poverty through delivery of critical public services; (b) increasing efficiency of service delivery; and (c) fostering greater accountability for service delivery.

The MPFM is informed by priorities set out in the government's Framework for Economic and Social Reform as well as its PFM reform strategy. It provides support for a number of sequenced improvements across core dimensions of public finance management and public administration at both central and local levels as well as enhanced service delivery performance. Furthermore, the project seeks to improve the whole PFM cycle by strengthening institutions and systems and by improving the ability of authorities to deliver services efficiently and transparently in line with citizen needs.

Project title: Establishment of a Bachelor Programme in Business Administration

Project Duration: 1st December 2014 – 31st December 2019

Implementing Organisation: Yangon Institute of Economics

Funds: 2,000,000 DKK

Project Description:

The objective of this project is to offer talented Myanmar students the opportunity to obtain an affordable and internationally accredited economics degree. With annual programme cost of approximately US \$ 4,000 per student this programme will be far more affordable than its equivalents in Europe, North America, Singapore or Australia. The expected outcome is up to 50 successful graduates every four years from the programme and either enter the Myanmar workforce in a field related to Business Administration or use their degree to pursue a Masters' degree.

Project title: The Voice of the Youth

Project Duration: 1st November 2014 – 30th June 2015

Implementing Organisation: Turning Tables

Funds: 787,000 DKK

Project Description:

The Sustainable Marketplace Initiative in Myanmar (SMI-M) is a private sector development project, which aims to promote inclusive, market-driven growth and productive employment. The SMI-M's goal is to meet the acute need of creating jobs to lift people out of poverty by maximizing the economic impact of official development assistance and foreign direct investment in Myanmar. Promoting a sustainable approach, the SMI-M works to create a growth and employment that will continue to be generated for future generations of job seekers.

Project title: The Sustainable Marketplace Initiative in Myanmar

Project Duration: 1st June 2014 – 31st March 2016

Implementing Organisation: Building Markets

Funds: 5,000,000 DKK

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Project title: Myanmar Civil Society Strengthening Programme

Project Duration: 1st April 2014 – 31st December 2015.

Implementing Organisation: Pyoe Pin

Funds: 5,000,000 DKK

Project Description:

Pyoe Pin aims to improve the opportunities for Myanmar people to influence their lives, coalition building of civil society groups for improving cooperation and coordination, policy and institutional change. The design of the project is founded upon an analysis of the political economy to seek to understand the causes of the challenges Myanmar faces, and then to develop a strategy for effective working founded upon this understanding. The expected outcome is that local organisations and individuals will be able to act cooperatively to address the needs and aspirations of Burmese people.

Project title: Myanmar: Promoting Just and Democratic Governance in the Reform Process

Project Duration: 1st May 2014 – 30th April 2017.

Implementing Organisation: Action Aid

Funds: 10,000,000 DKK

Project Description:

The main purpose of this project is to support the reform process for just and democratic governance in Myanmar by strengthening democratic institutions and promoting active citizenship. Specific objectives of the project are: 1) supporting the decentralisation process; 2) improving decentralised public service delivery and accountability mechanisms; 3) institutionalising participatory bottom-up planning; and 4) strengthening of the electoral process and promotion of free and fair elections. Through capacity building activities with key stakeholders, the project will advocate the necessity to include and support women in politics, in order to move towards a truly democratic system. All project activities are geared towards sustainability and creating an accountable, transparent and democratic system of coordination and cooperation between service providers and rights holders.

Project title: Regional Comprehensive Development and Local Plan for Chin State

Project Duration: 1st October 2013 – 31st January 2015

Implementing Organisation: The Institute for International Development (IID)

Funds: 2,000,000 DKK

Project Description:

The purpose of the project is to support decentralisation, state building, peace building and people-centered development in Chin State, Myanmar, by supporting the community stakeholders and state level authorities in identifying and prioritising the economic and social development needs of their local communities through a participatory planning process. The main objective is to produce an integrated social and economic development plan, through the involvement and coordination of local stakeholders and political duty-bearers, creating both an overview of the current development needs but also enabling a prioritization of the future development process.

Project title: Programme on Responsible Business in Myanmar

Project Duration: 1st January 2014 – 31st December 2015

Implementing Organisation: 1: International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) 2: International Labour Organisation (ILO) 3: Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB) and Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR)

Funds: ICJ : 9,000,000 DKK ILO: 10,000,000 DKK IHRB/DIHR: 5,000,000 DKK

Project Description:

The Programme for Responsible Business in Myanmar (PRB) aims at assisting Myanmar in linking inclusive economic development with responsible business practices in a period of two years (2014-2015). The programme comprises of three components: 1) the regulatory framework component; 2) the responsible industry development component; and 3) the private sector component on responsible business.

Project title: UNDP Country Programme

Project Duration: 1st December 2014 – 31st December 2015.

Implementing Organisation: UNDP

Funds: 23,000,000 DKK

Project Description:

The programme aims to promote poverty reduction and sustainable development which are rights-based, gender-sensitive, inclusive and equitable by strengthening institutional capacity of national and local governments and non-state actors. This will be pursued through three complementary pillars: 1) Effective local governance for sustainable inclusive community development; 2) Environment, climate change, energy and disaster risk reduction; and 3) Democratic governance and development effectiveness.

Project title: Media Development in Support of Democratic Governance & National Reconciliation in Myanmar

Project Duration: 1st September 2012 – 31st August 2015

Implementing Organisation: International Media Support (IMS)

Funds: 12,000,000 DKK

Project Description:

The program's overall objective is to contribute to democratic governance and national reconciliation by fostering access to information and civic engagement through the development of a competent, professional and independent media. This programme will focus on building of a sustainable media environment, in which the media can fulfill its role as the Fourth Estate of Democracy through the application of a proper legal framework, access to professional standards and capacity development, a rising level of public access and its ability to reflect and represents the diversity of views and interests in society, including those of marginalized groups. The following five areas will be given priority: 1) Coordination, national ownership and sustainability of media development; 2) Legal and policy reform framework; 3) Professionalization and capacity development; 4) Access to information and outreach of media; 5) Peace process and national reconciliation.

Project title: Implementation of Action Plan on the prevention of recruitment and use, and the release of children, from the Myanmar armed forces

Project Duration: 1st November 2012 – 30th October 2014

Implementing Organisation: UNICEF

Funds: 3,000,000 DKK

Project Description:

The objective of the proposed programme is for The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to undertake its commitments under the Action Plan between the Government of Myanmar and the UN on the Prevention of Recruitment and Release of Children from the Myanmar Armed Forces (the Action Plan) to support meaningful implementation by the Government of prevention of recruitment and release of children from the Myanmar Armed Forces and the long-term reintegration of such children in the community.

Education

Danida is supporting the formal education in Myanmar through the Multi Donor Education Fund and the Myanmar Education Consortium.

Project title: Support to Myanmar Education Consortium (MEC)

Project Duration: 1st May 2014 – 31st December 2016

Implementing Organisation: Myanmar Education Consortium

Funds: 5,000,000 DKK

Project Description:

The Myanmar Education Consortium (MEC) is a program designed in line with development and change in Myanmar's education sector and country context, to build on the skills and existing work of a diverse range of national civil society agencies to address the overwhelming basic education needs in Myanmar. In particular, MEC will support capacity building of complementary non-government education systems and structures including community and school based early childhood development and non-formal education programs for vulnerable children and young people who cannot attend government schools.

Project title: Improving Access to Quality Basic Education (MDEF - Multi Donor Education Fund)

Project Duration: 1st January 2012 - 31st December 2015

Implementing Organisation: UNICEF

Funds: 45,000,000 DKK

Project Description:

The Myanmar Quality Basic Education Programme (QBEP), the second phase of the Multi Donor Education Fund (MDEF), was launched in 2012, with UNICEF as donor and implementing partner, and with support provided by Denmark, Norway, Australia, the European Commission, and the UK. QBEP aims to provide the basis for a future democratic Myanmar in sustainable economic growth, including supporting the country's efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goal Two (all children must have completed primary education). The immediate objective is to increase the number and percentage of children who have access to and complete a qualitative sound basic education. The programme covers four areas: an extension of the existing Early Childhood Education programme, improving the quality of teaching in primary schools, improving the planning, management, monitoring and evaluation in primary schools and the education of children who have had to leave school.

Livelihood

Danida is primarily supporting livelihoods in Myanmar through the Livelihood and Food Security Trust Fund

Denmark is currently supporting four livelihood projects in Myanmar. Below you can find a short description of each of them.

Project title: Integrated assistance to the vulnerable populations in two areas of Myanmar: Dry Zone and Chin State

Project Duration: 1st June 2013 – 31st May 2015

Implementing Organisation: Solidarités International

Funds: 8,470,000 DKK

Project Description:

This project aims at improving the living conditions of vulnerable populations in Myanmar, through an integrated approach tackling water access, hygiene and livelihoods in Dry Zone and Chin State. The intervention areas include three townships in Dry Zone: Monywa, Yinmabin and Yesagyo, and Kanpetlet Township in Chin State.

Project title: Myanmar Farmers Innovating for Rural development and Environmental restoration

Project Duration: 1st June 2013 – 31st May 2016.

Implementing Organisation: GRET

Funds: 8,540,000 DKK

Project Description:

The overall objectives are twofold: i) to contribute to livelihood security and local governance improvements in rural areas of Myanmar and ii) to support the emergence and strengthening of appropriate services for rural development along with production and dissemination of relevant information for rural farming communities.

Project title: Improvement and reinforcement of livelihoods, food security, health and nutrition status of marginalized and vulnerable groups in border states, Myanmar

Project Duration: 1st August 2012 – 31st December 2015

Implementing Organisation: Action Contre La Faim (ACF)

Funds: 5,000,000 DKK

Project Description:

The main purpose of the proposed programme is to contribute to the improvement and reinforcement of livelihoods, food security, health and nutrition status of marginalized and vulnerable groups in border states of Myanmar.

More specifically, projects will aim to improve access to sustainable food production, income, WASH facilities and to prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition in three of border states: North Rakhine; Southern Chin; and Kayah States.

Project title: Livelihood and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT)

Project Duration: June 2011 – December 2016.

Implementing Organisation: Livelihood and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT)

Funds: 57,000,000 DKK

Project Description:

The Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT) is a multi-donor fund established in Myanmar in 2009. The overall goal of LIFT is to contribute towards Myanmar's achievement of Millennium Development Goal 1. The fund manager is United Office for Project Services (UNOPS). It is supported by Australia, Denmark, the European Union, France, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. LIFT aims to increase food availability and raise incomes for two million target beneficiaries.

Health

Danida is primarily supporting health improvement in Myanmar through the Three Millennium Development Goal Fund (3MDG)

With total health expenditure as percentage of GDP at around two percent, the Burmese people rely heavily on support from international donors. Especially in the areas of malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, where the population fall victim to some of the highest infection rates in Asia.

Project title: Myanmar: Advancing access to healthcare and WASH amongst vulnerable and crisis-prone communities in Myanmar

Project Duration: 1st April 2014 – 31st December 2016

Implementing Organisation: Merlin

Funds: 10,000,000 DKK

Project Description:

Merlin aims to improve the health status of highly vulnerable populations affected by marginalisation, displacement and conflict in Myanmar. Through this programme, Merlin expects to reach in excess of 800,000 direct beneficiaries amongst a total catchment population of 1,600,000 persons in marginalised ethnic areas including Chin State, Sagaing Division, North Shan State, and Kayah State. The principle of Merlin's strategy is to ensure that targeted communities have access to a package of essential services through its proven approach to village level primary health care activities.

Project title: Program on ensuring access to quality health information, products and services through the private sector in Myanmar

Project Duration: 1st July 2012 – 31st December 2014

Implementing Organisation: PSI - Population Service International

Funds: 9,000,000 DKK

Project Description:

Address the health needs of poor and vulnerable people in Burma. The project will support PSI's existing strategies to improve health outcomes related to six target disease areas, namely reproductive health (RH), sexual health including HIV-related illnesses, tuberculosis, malaria, and childhood illnesses such as diarrheal disease and pneumonia.

Project title: Three Millennium Development Goal Fund (3MDG)

Project Duration: 1st January 2012 – 31st December 2016.

Implementing Organisation: UNOPS

Funds: 55,000,000 DKK

Project Description:

The overarching objective of the 3MDG is to contribute to national progress towards the health Millennium Development Goals through a rights-based approach. This will reflect the principles of non-discrimination, equality, participation, transparency and accountability and will give high priority to strengthening voice and accountability including through building the capacity of civil society and community structures. The specific goal of the fund is improved maternal, newborn and child health and a reduction in communicable disease burden in areas supported by the 3MDG. The Danish contribution to the 3MDG will support the existing focus on health as a priority area in the Danish assistance to Burma.