

DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION

A. Major Development Partners: Strategic Foci and Key Activities

1. Since reengagement with Myanmar in 2012, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has placed emphasis on developing strong partnerships with development partners, civil society, and the private sector. In its interim country partnership strategy, 2012–2014 (extended to 2015–2016), ADB stresses the importance of collaborating closely with development partners and maintaining effective two-way communication channels with civil society organizations, in recognition of the diversity of civil society participants within the country.¹ In line with this, the project conducted a series of consultation workshops with development partners, civil society organizations (CSOs), and nongovernment organizations (NGOs) working in Mon state, specifically in Chaungzon Island, Kyaiktho, Mawlamyine, and Mudon, to explore opportunities for collaboration. Consultation workshops were designed to gather information on challenges and lessons from implementing similar projects; inputs on site and beneficiary selection; and possible collaboration with CSOs. The table, Consultations with Development Partners, provides a summary of key activities undertaken by development partners consulted.

B. Institutional Arrangements and Processes for Development Coordination

2. Findings during consultations reveal that CSOs, development partners, and NGOs require better mechanisms for collaboration. Existing mechanisms were described as ad hoc. Participants suggested that the project would be a good opportunity to form an advisory committee of stakeholders working in the same geographic areas with similar beneficiaries, and developing similar products. This working group would provide an excellent mechanism for collaboration and cooperation between CSOs, development partners, and NGOs in Mon state. CSO participants indicated that it is important to have a government representative on this type of working committee to build their capacity and, in turn, acquire their support and resources for the various projects.

C. Achievements and Issues

3. The project will build on experiences of CSOs and development partners. The two CSO workshops identified similar challenges and lessons.² Development agencies and producers identified issues related to (i) lack of practical support from authorities; (ii) lack of linkages with broader market and commercial networks; (iii) the need for market assessments specific to each product line before commencing value chain enhancements; (iv) greater transparency in selection of sites and beneficiaries; (v) the need for linkages with social enterprises that can bridge the gap between mainstream businesses and development projects; (vi) small project budgets and lack of expertise in rolling out assistance programs for producers; and (viii) lack of appropriate technologies for improving efficiency and quality of production. Lessons include (i) thorough market assessments are required before starting these types of projects with producers; (ii) broad stakeholder support and consultation from the state to individual households should be required during project appraisal and implementation (this is vital for success); (iii) individual projects need to improve their advocacy, monitoring and evaluation, and

¹ ADB. 2012. *Interim Country Partnership Strategy: Myanmar, 2012–2014*. Manila.

² The CSOs consulted included Women's Organization Network, Mon Women's Organization, Mon Women's Network, Mon CSO Network, Mon–Region Social Development Network, Mon Women's Development Association, and Myanmar Women's Entrepreneurs Association.

communication skills to disseminate lessons and decrease recurrent failures; (iv) strong stakeholder networks need to be established at the beginning of a project to support greater participation and coordination of stakeholders working in the same area.

4. During project preparation, greater synergies with ADB and other development partner interventions in Myanmar were explored. The project interventions to promote pro-poor micro and small enterprises in Mon state are designed to enable entrepreneurs and women to maximize the benefits of increased trade and tourism as a result of road improvements supported by the Greater Mekong Subregion East–West Economic Corridor Eindu to Kawkareik Road Improvement.³ Lessons from the Enhancing Rural Livelihoods and Incomes in Myanmar Project will be identified and applied during grant implementation.⁴ The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has several projects to support the government, including addressing the needs of ethnic minorities. In 2012, JICA conducted a study to collect information and confirm development needs of ethnic minorities in Kayin and Mon states under the Integrated Regional Development for Ethnic Minorities in the Southeast Myanmar Project.⁵ The project’s skills development components will complement and identify linkages with Swiss Contact’s Myanmar Vocational Skills Development Program, which includes Mon state.

D. Summary and Recommendations

5. Findings from the consultations were used to support the design of stakeholder consultations integrated into project implementation. The project includes the following mechanisms for ongoing development partner consultation and coordination: (i) development partners, CSOs, relevant representatives from industries, academia, or related fields will be invited to participate at the National Steering Committee meetings, based on need; and (ii) project biannual review and planning meetings will be attended by relevant CSOs, development partners, and other stakeholders directly collaborating and implementing the project activities to ensure smooth implementation and greater coordination and synergy of efforts.

Consultations with Development Partners

Organization	Programs, Opportunities for Linkages, and Issues and Challenges
CARE International	Programs: Livelihoods, value chain development, land tenure, gendered technical approach, capacity building, women’s economic empowerment projects. Experience in Mon state with women’s economic empowerment and value chain development for MSEs Opportunities: Potential partner for implementation phase, training and value chain development
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Programs: Vocational training programs in Mawlamyine (e.g., sewing, hairdressing, mechanics), targeting migrants Challenges: Vocational training alone is not enough to help people set up their own businesses, access to credit and basic business management skills are also necessary. IOM provides training but does not help migrants set up businesses. Opportunities: IOM can provide data on mobile population and migrant clusters.

³ ADB. 2013. *Concept Paper. Greater Mekong Subregion East–West Economic Corridor Eindu to Kawkareik Road Improvement*. Manila.

⁴ ADB. 2013. *Completion Report: Enhancing Rural Livelihoods and Incomes in Myanmar*. Manila.

⁵ Japan International Cooperation Agency and Government of Myanmar, Ministry of Border Affairs. 2013. *Preparatory Survey for the Integrated Regional Development for Ethnic Minorities in Southeast Myanmar. Final Report*. Nay Pyi Taw.

	Because it has experience providing vocational training in Mon state, future collaboration is possible.
Norwegian Refugee Council	<p>Areas of interest: livelihoods, social development, mobile training on livelihoods</p> <p>Specific experience in fruit processing and preservative training</p> <p>Highlighted needs: Community involvement and participation essential; capacity building in packaging and promotion for MSEs; support for beneficiaries longer term, i.e., 3 to 6 months post-training programs</p> <p>Challenges: Communication infrastructure, building trust and confidence of local communities and governments, requirement of travel authorities for specific areas</p> <p>Operating in areas with government and non-state actors.</p>
PACT WORLD	<p>Programs: PACT does not have programs in Mon state. In general, it (i) provides integrated community development; water, sanitation and hygiene; civil society strengthening; capacity building and education; and (ii) training to women's groups and communities on group saving schemes, SME business skills, and financial management</p> <p>Challenges: Communication infrastructure, long lead in time to gain MOU approval.</p> <p>Opportunities: SME and credit training linkages</p>
Pyoe Pin Programme	<p>Programs: Pyoe Pin supports grassroots community projects, education, and livelihoods in Mon state through capacity building, CSO support, and training; works with local CSO organizations; supports Mon Centanar</p> <p>Challenges: Limited linkages to Yangon and tourist markets. Working in relevant languages</p> <p>Highlighted needs: Access to markets, understanding of credit and loans, training required on packaging and promotion, hygiene training for food production, education on credit</p> <p>Opportunities: Dried fruit production and Betel nuts, development of products in areas close to the beaches in Mawlamyine, product to fit Thai market, local resources for handicrafts and food raw materials to be repackaged for tourist market</p>
Trocaire	<p>Programs: Education, empowerment of women in leadership and politics, social development in Mon state, support for Mon Women's Networks and Mon Education programs</p> <p>Highlighted needs: Run business and promotional skill training in conjunction with gender and leadership skills</p> <p>Challenges: Communication infrastructure and operating in areas with government and non-state actors ; long lead times for MOU approval</p> <p>Opportunity: Linkages with trainings and women's programs</p>
World Vision	<p>Programs: Microfinance across Myanmar and in Mon state; 57,000 clients with a loan portfolio of \$8.1 million; 85% of clients are women, with an average loan size of \$150.</p> <p>Operates in Mon state; office in Mawlamyine</p> <p>Opportunities: Microfinance and social impact linkages; beneficiary SME financing and educational opportunities</p>

CSO = civil society organization, IOM = International Organization for Migration, MSE = micro and small enterprises, MOU = memorandum of understanding, SME= small and medium enterprises

Source: Asian Development Bank