SUMMARY POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL STRATEGY

Country:	Myanmar	Project Title:	Economic Empowerment of the Poor and Women in the East–West Economic Corridor
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Lending/Financing	Grant from the Japan Fund for	Department:	Southeast Asia Department
Modality:	Poverty Reduction	Division:	Office of the Director General

I. POVERTY AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY

Poverty targeting: Targeted intervention—geographic (TI-G)

A. Links to the National Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Growth Strategy and Country Partnership Strategy Myanmar focuses on inclusive growth as one of its economic policy objectives in the National Development Plan, 2012–2016. Creation of jobs and income-generating activities to reduce poverty is a key priority, as highlighted in the government's National Comprehensive Development Plan, 2011–2031. In line with these objectives, the interim country partnership strategy, 2012–2014 (extended from 2015–2016) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for Myanmar provides a medium-term goal to assist the government in promoting sustainable and inclusive economic development and job creation in support of poverty reduction.^a The strategy is in line with ADB's Strategy 2020, which has a strong focus on poverty reduction and inclusive growth.^b The project supports these objectives by promoting pro-poor micro and small enterprises (MSEs) in 12 poor villages in Chaungzon, Kyaiktho, Mawlamyine, and Mudon townships in Mon state. About 55% of the state's population are self-employed, operating MSEs, such as selling prepared foods or snacks and woven products in nearby markets.^c

B. Results from the Poverty and Social Analysis during PPTA or Due Diligence

- 1. Key poverty and social issues. About 26% of Myanmar's population lives in poverty. The government aims to reduce the poverty rate to 16% by 2015. The government's agenda for poverty reduction is reflected in its series of national development plans, such as the National Comprehensive Development Plan, 2011-2030, the 5-year development and annual development plans, and the Framework for Economic and Social Reforms (announced by the government in January 2013). Poverty is more intense in rural areas where about 85% of the poor live. The disparities between rural and urban areas, and between poor and non-poor households are significant for various indicators such as health and education.c In 2010, about 81% of the population had access to health care: 75% of rural residents, 96% of urban dwellers, 77% of the poor, and 82% of the non-poor. The net enrolment rate in primary education is 88%: 87% for rural residents, 92% for urban dwellers, 81% for the poor, and 90% for the non-poor. In Mon state, disparities also exist in access to basic services: only 65% of poor households have access to safe drinking water compared with 83% of non-poor households; and only 72% of households in the rural areas have access to electricity compared with 81% in urban areas. In Kyaikhto, water supply relies mainly on dug wells. The economy is dominated by agriculture, however, the contribution of agriculture and rural enterprises to economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction is hampered by limited access to credit, markets, and services, as well as low human capital development. Self-employed and contributing family workers comprise 54.3% of total employment; this is higher in rural areas. These own-account workers usually operate MSEs, which have limited opportunities to grow as challenges include (i) limited product knowledge and access to technology, and lack of skilled employees; (ii) lack of knowledge and skills among entrepreneurs in business development, processing, and supply chain services; (iii) limited access to finance and markets; and (iv) weak infrastructure and institutional support.
- 2. Beneficiaries. Primary beneficiaries will be women entrepreneurs and owners of MSEs, and poor community members who will be provided with training on technical skills, production techniques, business development, and management skills; and those who will be supported to access credit, business services, processing, and marketing facilities to enable them to establish or expand their own businesses. The direct beneficiaries are those who will be employed in new MSEs, markets, and processing facilities—most are women. Households headed by women, very poor community members, and/or women from ethnic groups will be prioritized to participate in project activities. Community members and consumers will benefit from improved processing facilities and markets.
- **3. Impact channels.** The project will train women, the poor, and marginalized on various skills to help them develop and sell marketable products, start-up and/or effectively manage their own enterprises, or obtain employment. Assessing livelihood needs and commercial potential of local products, and identifying interventions for women and the poor to benefit from new or improved enterprises will open up new opportunities. Training on business development and management and related skills, and facilitating access to finance and markets will help women to establish profitable businesses. New jobs expected to be created by improved MSEs, combined with training on skills aligned with labor market needs, will help the unemployed, especially women, to obtain employment.
- **4. Design features**. The project aims to address the key constraints faced by women entrepreneurs and MSEs, through the following outputs: (i) improving the technical knowledge and skills of entrepreneurs and producers and their employees to produce marketable products, i.e., handicrafts and processed foods, with high demand for local and tourist markets; (ii) Improving access to business services, credit, and commercial networks; and (iii) improving infrastructure to support producers to access markets and processing facilities.

II. PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERING THE POOR				
 Participatory approaches and project activities. Stakeholder consultations and meetings were held with producers, retailers, tourism sector participants including owners of hotels and guesthouses, the state government MSE committee, civil society organizations (CSOs), and nongovernment organizations. In addition, producer households in Mudon, Chaungzon Island and retailers at the Kin Pun basecamp were visited to conduct one-on-one interviews. The project was designed in collaboration with these key stakeholders. Activities to ensure empowerment of the poor and vulnerable include the formation of and support for producer groups, vendor associations, and market and processing facility management committees, with quotas for women's participation. Civil society organizations. Consultation workshops were undertaken in Mawlamyine and Kyaihkhto to engage with CSOs, development partners, and nongovernment organizations working in Mon state, specifically in Chaungzon, Kyaikhto, Mawlamyine, and Mudon. The workshops were designed to gather information on challenges and lessons from implementing similar projects; inputs on site and beneficiary selection; and possible collaboration with the CSOs. The following forms of civil society organization participation are envisaged during project implementation, rated as high (H), medium (M), low (L), or not applicable (NA) Honedium plan. Yes. Each participating village will appoint at least four village focal point representatives (at 				
least two women from each village), who are members of project producer groups, to participate in biannual planning				
and review meetings and assist the project implementation unit (PIU) coordinators to facilitate project activities in the villages. Relevant CSOs, development partners, and other stakeholders directly collaborating and implementing the				
project activities will attend the biannual review and planning meetings. III. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT				
Gender mainstreaming category: Gender equity (GEN)				
A. Key issues. Myanmar ranks 96th of 146 countries in the 2011 Gender Inequality Index. It has met the Millennium				
Development Goal target for eliminating gender disparity in primary, secondary, and tertiary education. However, the share of women in wage employment outside of agriculture (44.7%) has not yet achieved parity with men. The female labor participation rate remains low at 54% compared with 82% for males, indicating that women's education and skills have not translated into equal economic opportunities for women. In Mon state, women's labor force participation rate is 48.6% compared with 81.7% for males. About 57% of women, (52.4% of men) are own-account workers, engaged in MSEs. However, women face additional difficulties in maintaining and expanding their businesses. They face time and mobility constraints as a result of their dual roles in managing households and businesses; they have limited access to training and extension services, and they have difficulty accessing credit due to their lack of property ownership to use as collateral.				
B. Key actions.				
☐ Gender action plan ☐ Other actions or measures ☐ No action or measure The project promotes women's empowerment by directly targeting women as participants and recipients in interventions to improve livelihood and employment options. It addresses women's constraints related to starting, managing, or expanding their businesses through training; improved access to business and processing services, credit, and markets; and improved market facilities for handicrafts and processed food. The gender action plan provides targets and quotas for women's participation.				
IV. ADDRESSING SOCIAL SAFEGUARD ISSUES				
A. Involuntary Resettlement Safeguard Category: A B C FI				
1. Key impacts . The project will not cause any involuntary land acquisition. No physical and economic displacement is expected. Output 3 aims to provide retailers and traders with a market facility in Mawlamyine and a multifunction processing center in Kyaikhto. The land for the market and the processing facility will be vacant, unused, and unoccupied, and be identified and provided by the government and project beneficiaries. Due diligence during project implementation will confirm that (i) the project will not entail further land acquisition; (ii) that where land is available, such land is free from encumbrances; and (iii) no past or existing land and resettlement issues relate to existing				
facilities. 2. Strategy to address the impacts. None.				
3. Plan or other Actions.				
☐ Resettlement plan ☐ Combined resettlement and indigenous peoples plan ☐ Resettlement framework ☐ Combined resettlement framework and indigenous peoples ☐ Environmental and social management system arrangement ☐ Description of the planning framework and indigenous peoples planning framework ☐ Social impact matrix ☐ Social impact matrix				
B. Indigenous Peoples Safeguard Category: A B C FI				
1. Key impacts. The project will not support any activities that have any adverse impacts on indigenous peoples. Both the project areas have a high presence of ethnic minority groups who are the primary project beneficiaries, meeting the criteria of integration of indigenous peoples elements in the project design. No specific targets are set for indigenous peoples participation. Consultation and participation will be continued throughout the project cycle to				

3. Plan or other actions.	ensure their involvement in access to finance, training, a social and gender analysis will include an assessment of a and participation summary will be included as part of project Is broad community support triggered? 2. Strategy to address the impacts. None.	and impact of the project on ethnic groups. A consultation			
Indigenous peoples planning framework Combined resettlement framework and indigenous peoples planning framework Social impact matrix Popules planning framework Indigenous peoples plan elements integrated in project with a summary No action V. ADDRESSING OTHER SOCIAL RISKS A. Risks in the Labor Market ADDRESSING OTHER SOCIAL RISKS A. Risks in the Labor Market ADDRESSING OTHER SOCIAL RISKS A. Risks in the Labor Market Lipetrenchment		Combined resettlement plan and indigenous			
□ Environmental and social management system arrangement □ Social impact matrix □ No action □ No action □ V. ADDRESSING OTHER SOCIAL RISKS A. Risks in the Labor Market □ Relevance of the project for the country's or region's or sector's labor market, indicated as high (H), medium (M), and low or not significant (L). □ Unemployment □ Unemployment □ Unemployment □ Core labor standards □ Labor market impact. Unemployed wormen and the poor who gain skills through project training will be able to enter the labor market, specifically in improved MSEs, processing facilities, new market infrastructure, and other related employment. Migrants will also gain knowledge and skills needed in the labor market through information on safe migration and life skills, which will be included in all project training. B. Affordability The project will not charge fees for training activities. In terms of financing and executing management, operation, and maintenance of both facilities, recurrent cost will be generated from rental from the market and sales from the processing center. In addition, consultations were held with retailers and CSOs to assess willingness to pay and sustainability of retail spaces at the craft and souvenir market. C. Communicable Diseases and Other Social Risks 1. The impact of the following risks are rated as high (H), medium (M), low (L), or not applicable (NA): NA Communicable diseases □ Human trafficking 2. Risks to people in project area. The integrated benefits and impacts of the project are expected to outweigh the costs. Major risks and mitigating measures are described in the risk assessment and risk management plan. VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION 1. Targets and indicators. The project provides targets for the number of (i) men and women participating in skills training. (ii) products for which commercial viability and value-chain analysis is conducted; (iii) enterprises established and supported; (iv) producer associations registered; (v) producers accessing affordable credit; (vi) local comm					
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(viii) members of producer and vehicul associations, and market management committee.					
2. Required human resources . The national project director will be responsible for the management of the overall					
project. The director, supported by a consultant team, will carry out effective project supervision, monitoring, and					
reporting; provide technical inputs; and support semiannual planning and review processes. For the PIU, the project					
manager will be responsible for implementation of activities in the project's target areas in Chaungzon, Kyaikhto,					
Mawlamyine, and Mudon townships in Mon state.					

- 3. **Information in the project administration manual**. The PAM provides information on the preparation of regular biannual grant status reports, quarterly progress reports, midterm evaluation report, and project completion report.
- 4. **Monitoring tools**. A project performance monitoring framework will be developed to record the project's technical and financial performance, and timely delivery of project activities and milestones; and assess achievement of project objectives and social, economic, and institutional impacts.
- ^a ADB. 2014. Interim Country Partnership Strategy: Myanmar, 2015–2016. Manila.
- b ADB. 2008. Strategy 2020: The Long-Term Strategic Framework of the Asian Development Bank, 2008–2020. Manila.
- ^c Government of Myanmar, Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development; Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency; United Nations Children's Fund; and United Nations Development Programme. 2011. *Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey in Myanmar (2009–2010)*. Nay Pyi Taw.