



# WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME MYANMAR Southeast Operational Brief

## OVERVIEW

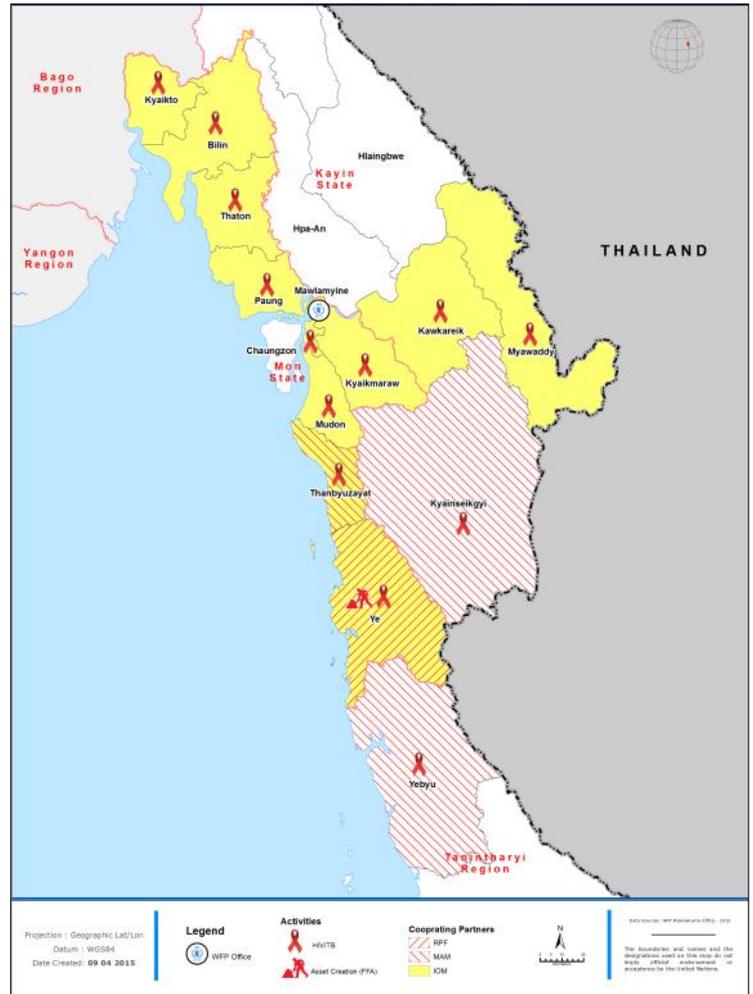
Southeast Myanmar is composed of Kayin and Mon States and Tanintharyi Region, bordering with Thailand to the east and south, Bago Region and the Andaman Sea to the west and Shan State to the north. With a population of approximately 6.6 million, this area is inhabited by Mon, Bamar, Kayin, Rakhine, Chin, Kachin, Pa-O, Shan, Salone and Malay ethnic groups.

Since the country's independence, the discord between the Government and ethnic groups for federalism instigated the armed conflicts between the Myanmar military and ethnic armed groups including New Mon State Party (NMSPP), Karen National Union (KNU) and Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA). The clashes with KNU and NMSPP, the dominant armed groups of Southeast, culminated in decades of instability and displacement of hundreds of thousands of people.

Regardless of a relatively low level of armed conflict, Tanintharyi region has sustained decades of displacement connected to military practices, land confiscation, arbitrary taxation and commercial investment projects. As of 2013, approximately 6,000 refugees from Tanintharyi were in Thailand and 71,650 individuals were estimated to be internally displaced<sup>1</sup>.

According to UNHCR, 110,000 refugees including two-thirds originated from Kayin State has remained in Thailand in 2015. The Border Consortium comprising ten international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) from eight countries, the main provider of food, shelter and other forms of support to refugees from Myanmar in western Thailand and to IDPs in the Southeast, estimated 400,000 IDPs in the Southeast.

Although the conflicts have been declined, destruction or confiscation of agricultural land and crops as a military tactic in the past has resulted in food insecurity. Poor infrastructures, restriction on access to farmlands and markets in non-government controlled area are also attributed to food insecurity. Moreover, flooding and droughts combined with unequitable agricultural potential across the Southeast have detrimental effects on food security in terms of unstable commodity prices, inflation and availability of food. In recent years, livelihoods have been advanced with rubber and palm oil plantation, extractive industries as well as business innovations such as Dawei deep seaport in Tanintharyi Region. This however has led to land grabbing and deforestation which has impact on agricultural productivity and food security as subsistence farming being major income source for local populations. The land issues are also considered as a major impediment to return for refugees and IDPs.



## PARTNERSHIPS

### Government Counterpart

- Ministry of Border Affairs (Department of Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs)

### Coordination with Other Government Partners

- Ministry of Social Welfare (Relief and Resettlement Department), Ministry of Health, Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development
- Kayin, Mon State and Tanintharyi Region Government

### UN Coordination Agencies



### Cooperating Partners



<sup>1</sup>UNHCR Tanintharyi Region Profile (June 2014)



Village access road renovation in Kan Ni village from Ye Township, Mon State.

**Response:** Since 2008, WFP has been providing food and nutrition support to the people living with HIV (PLHIV) and TB clients from Southeast of Myanmar through IOM. To expand the scope, WFP opened Mawlamyine sub-office in June 2014 with the primary objective to support the most vulnerable populations from conflict-affected areas within Southeast as well as to assist future returnees through short-term unconditional food transfers, small scale assets creation, school feeding and nutrition activities. The operational strategy of WFP sub-office is twofold; i) to support the ongoing peace process and sustainable peace in Southeast Myanmar through food assistance; and ii) to support capacity-building in food security of State/Regional government counterparts and administration of ethnic armed groups in terms of emergency and disaster preparedness, response and early recovery. In August 2014, WFP in coordination with the Department of Relief and Resettlement (RDD) provided high energy biscuits to 194 victims from 38 households affected by strong wind in Mon State. During 2015, WFP aims to reach over 21,000 beneficiaries with 981 mt food delivery.

**Partnerships:** Humanitarian needs in the Southeast are difficult to separate from longer term development needs. As such, WFP together with UN partners will cover these areas through a separate durable solutions framework. In particular, under the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) framework for Action, the Zero Hunger Challenge and the Renewed Effort Against Child Hunger and Undernutrition (REACH), WFP will cooperate with its strategic partners to scale up nutrition-sensitive and nutrition specific interventions through a multi-sectorial and multi-stakeholder approach. WFP has partnered with International Organization for Migration (IOM), Medical Action Myanmar (MAM) and Rahmonnya Peace Foundation (RPF), who also provide support to conflict affected people and HIV/TB, malaria patients.

### Mawlamyine Sub-office Annual Food Plan 2015

State/Region	Cooperating Partners	Activity	# of beneficiaries	Total (MT)
Mon	WFP direct implementation	Food for Asset	2,000	217
		Emergency	15,000	17
	IOM	HIV programme	1,200	241
		TB programme	900	181
	MAM	HIV programme	300	33
RPF	Food for Asset	1,000	108	
Kayin	IOM	HIV programme	300	50
		TB programme	200	40
	MAM	TB programme	800	86
TB programme		80	9	
<b>Total</b>			<b>21,780</b>	<b>981</b>

### Looking Forward

**Emergency Response and Preparedness:** Southeast coastal region is prone to cyclones and floods; therefore, WFP strategically positioned its sub-office in Mawlamyine to enhance emergency preparedness and response capability for up to 15,000 people. WFP will conduct Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) activities at watershed level to prevent rivers to flood and destroy paddy fields and rice banks. In particular, an active and well-functioning DRR coordination working group has been closely working with the Mon State Government since its formation in 2014. WFP has been one of the key actors and will be leading Logistics and Emergency Telecommunication clusters of the group, advancing beyond food security. The objectives of this working group are in line with the sub-office's operational strategy.

**Nutrition:** UNICEF indicates that children from Kayin, Kayah States and Tanintharyi Region still have unmet basic needs in terms of nutrition and health care. The UNICEF studies<sup>1</sup> also suggested that in the Southeast 30% of children are stunted. Urban nutrition emergency preparedness and rice fortification could be some of the key areas for WFP nutrition programming in the Southeast. Whenever possible, WFP would strengthen the integration of nutrition interventions within the government health structures. This will promote a continuum of care for the beneficiaries, a better referral to the existing health services (growth monitoring, ante-natal care, post-natal care), and will contribute to sustainability of the interventions and development of local capacities. The national Zero Hunger Challenge could provide a harmonised and coherent framework for the UN to jointly support governments' efforts to eradicate hunger in the region.

**HIV/TB programme:** One of the negative outcomes of migration is the prevalence of HIV infection within the communities. WFP aims to reach 3,700 HIV/TB clients from 14 townships across the Southeast in 2015 through its food-by-prescription activity.

**Assets Creation:** WFP will implement community assets creation activities, which involve rain water collection tank construction and road renovation/construction, to reach 3,000 persons from Ye, Bilin and Kyaik Hto townships in Mon State.

**Surveys:** In 2015, in coordination with the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, WFP will conduct food security and poverty estimation surveys in the Southeast that will further support understanding of the situation in the area. The results will be consolidated with the food security surveys in all other states and Regions to develop the country's first national food security atlas.

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<sup>1</sup>UNICEF snapshots of Child Wellbeing