Letter of Agreement Signed Between the Department of Rural Development and WFP

On 17 September, a Letter of Agreement (LoA) between WFP and the Department of Rural Development under the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development (MLFRD) was signed in Naypyitaw. WFP Country Director Mr Dom Scalpelli attended the signing ceremony, where he reconfirmed WFP’s commitment to cooperating on the institutionalization of MLFRD’s technical capacities related to food security and poverty vulnerability assessment and enhancement of the ministry’s programmatic coordination on poverty reduction and rural development. WFP is cooperating with MLFRD to carry out food security surveys across the country. The technical and analytical capacities of MLFRD staff development will be supported through the establishment of a central information office in Naypyitaw and resource centres across the country. WFP will provide technical equipment and trainings. A series of food security surveys has already been conducted in Chin, Kachin, Shan States, Sagaing, Bago, Ayeyarwaddy and Yangon Regions as well as the Dry Zone in collaboration with MLFRD.

In the same afternoon, WFP presented the main findings of the Delta zone - Bago, Ayeyarwaddy and Yangon Regions - food security and poverty survey to the participants from MLFRD and several ministries in Naypyitaw. The survey was jointly conducted with MLFRD in January 2014. One thousand and eight hundred households from the Delta zone were interviewed on their food consumption, dietary diversity, hunger scale, food provisioning, coping mechanisms, income, assets and expenditures. The findings have shown that 26 percent of the households from Ayeyarwaddy, 23 percent from Bago and 21 percent from Yangon regions are living below the national poverty line.

Kachin Humanitarian Cross-line Mission

From 7 to 13 September, in coordination with OCHA and partners, WFP organized the logistics of and participated in a humanitarian cross-line mission to Laiza administered by the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO). WFP provided 115 mt of life-saving food assistance to 14,900 IDPs in five camps through the convoys from Myitkyina to Moe Mauk and Waing Maw Townships. The WFP mission distributed one-month full rations consisting of rice, pulses, oil, salt and blended food, to the IDPs in Woi Chyai and Hpun Lum Yang camps. Meanwhile selected rations (pulses, oil, salt and blended food) were provided to Market-3 and Je Yang camps to complement Karuna Myanmar Social Services (KMSS) distribution. The IDPs in IDP Boarding school received salt and blended food for one month, and some households in Je Yang camps received two-month rations of salt and blended food. WFP Country Director also participated in the mission.
Resources
As of October 2014, food pipeline breaks are expected from December onwards. WFP Myanmar appeals for US$37 million in order to meet all food assistance needs until June 2015. New contributions are required as soon as possible, taking into account the lead time of procurement and to ensure uninterrupted food assistance.

The top five funding sources to WFP in Myanmar are Japan, EU, USA, Australia and Switzerland. In 2014, funding has also been received from Canada, Japan Association for WFP, UN CERF and Yum! Brands.

Australian Ambassador’s Visit to Northern Shan
From 30 September to 2 October, a mission led by the Australian Ambassador to Myanmar Ms Bronte Moules visited northern Shan State to observe the impact of Australian supported WFP activities and to meet with the beneficiaries. The mission, accompanied by WFP Country Director Mr Dom Scalpelli, visited Ban Lung and Nay Won Ni IDP camps in Namt Kham and Muse townships, where delegates had some interaction with the IDPs. The mission also visited already completed asset creation projects, implemented under WFP cash for assets activities of village road renovation, water supply system and school building construction. The mission also had the opportunity to observe WFP school feeding activities - take home rice ration distribution and on-site feeding of High Energy Biscuits in Lashio township - supported by Australia. During the visit, the mission met with the Director of the General Administration Department, northern Shan State and visited an Asian Harm Reduction Network clinic, where WFP provides food support to the HIV/TB clients, undergoing anti-retroviral therapy. WFP Myanmar received a generous contribution of AUD 5 million (US$4.6 million) from the Government of Australia in June 2014. The grant has been allocated in support of relief assistance to the conflict affected and displaced populations in Rakhine, Kachin and northern Shan.

Mobile Data Collection Training
In September, WFP Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) unit provided two days training on mobile data collection to the Myanmar Farmer Association - one of the WFP led Food Security Information Network (FSIN) members. Farmers from 23 townships were trained on mobile data collection technology - Open Data Kit (ODK) software in Myanmar language - that allows for rapid, efficient analysis of information following an assessment. The training took place at Union of Myanmar Federation of Chamber of Commerce (UMFCCI) office in Yangon.

Farmers practicing ODK software on their mobile phones. Photo: WFP/Zun Nu Yi Hlaing

Ambassador Moules and WFP Country Director interacting with beneficiaries.

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