

Rural Development in Myanmar



On the occasion of World Rural Development Day 2025, it is my great privilege to extend warm greetings and best wishes to the international community and our fellow member countries of the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP). Myanmar takes great pride in being an active and committed member of CIRDAP and warmly joins this meaningful observance by reflecting on our national achievements and ongoing efforts in advancing rural development.

Rural development holds critical importance in Myanmar, where 70 percent of country's population reside in rural areas. Rural poverty remains nearly three times higher than urban

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poverty, presenting significant challenges to inclusive growth and balanced national development. In response, the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development has been implementing a range of inclusive and sustainable measures aimed at narrowing the development gap and improving the quality of life in rural communities.

Guided by the Myanmar Comprehensive Sustainable Development Plan and the Rural Development Strategic Framework, substantial progress has been achieved across multiple sectors. These include the enhancement of the cooperative sector in agriculture and livestock-based production, the improvement of rural infrastructure, the comprehensive development of rural socio-economic life, and the advancement of small and medium-sized cottage industries.

Specifically, to strengthen the cooperative sector, activities involve the formation of cooperative societies, the sale of agricultural machinery and inputs on an installment basis, the provision of microfinance credit programs, and the implementation of capacity-building initiatives. In the infrastructure sector, extensive projects have been carried out to construct rural roads and bridges, establish safe water supply systems, and implement rural electrification. These efforts have collectively improved year-round access to social services, essential infrastructure, and markets,

To promote financial inclusion and livelihood enhancement, the Revolving Fund Project and Rural Business Fund Project have been effectively implemented, providing credit services for smallholder farmers and micro, small, and medium-sized business owners while



supporting income diversification. Complementary to these efforts, the Ministry has prioritized human capital development through vocational training and livelihood support programs tailored to local market needs. These initiatives have created job opportunities, supported micro-entrepreneurship, and empowered rural women and youth.

Notably, we have emphasized the importance of inclusiveness, coherence, and comprehensiveness in our poverty reduction efforts. Thus, the SMART Village Project was initiated to bring together various sectors, including ecological protection, and create a holistic approach that addresses the diverse challenges faced by our rural communities.

In support of small-scale industries, we ensure their proper registration and operation under the Small-Scale Industries Law, establishes incubation centers for vocational training and value-added production, sets up research laboratories for product safety testing, and extends microfinance services to facilitate livelihood activities and household income generation.

Looking ahead, Myanmar remains fully committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We will continue to prioritize integrated, community-centered development approaches while deepening regional cooperation through CIRDAP and other international partnerships. On this special occasion, I wish to reaffirm Myanmar's dedication to advancing rural development and contributing to shared progress for a resilient, inclusive, and prosperous Asia-Pacific region.

