

Food and Nutrition Security in Rakhine State

Background

Rakhine State in the Western part of Myanmar, bordering Bangladesh, is among the least developed regions with high rates of poverty. About half of the children under the age of five suffer from chronic malnutrition which can lead to irreversible physical and mental impairment.

Opportunities and Challenges

Food insecurity and malnutrition remain a challenge for the poorest and most vulnerable people in rural areas in the Rakhine State. Among the most affected are women and children with a high malnutrition and child mortality rate.

Low dietary diversity, inadequate hygiene practices and limited access to basic health services are amongst the main causes for malnutrition. In addition, poor income opportunities, difficult access to markets, frequent natural disasters and political unrest hamper improvements towards Food and Nutrition Security.

Early childhood nutrition, especially during the first 1000 days (from conception until the age of two), has crucial long-term consequences on cognitive outcomes, educational attainment, adult earnings, chronic morbidity, and premature adult mortality.

Hence, efforts to improve the nutritional status of adolescent girls, women and young children are vital to ensuring long-term national development. Better nutrition will result in improved intellectual capacity, greater economic productivity, and lowered risk of non-communicable diseases of the target communities.

Objective

Embedded within the Strategy on Transitional Development Assistance of the German government, the objective of the project is to improve the dietary and hygiene practices of people in selected regions of Rakhine State, particularly among women between 15 and 49 and children between 6 and 23 months. Furthermore, the European Union seeks to support the sustainable intensification of the aquaculture sector, thereby realizing its potential for food security, nutrition and livelihoods. Thus, GIZ combines these mutual goals to combat malnutrition effectively, and the measures from different sectors to address all dimensions of food and nutrition security in Rakhine State of Myanmar.

Project Name	Food and Nutrition Security in Rakhine State, Myanmar
Commissioned by	European Union (EU), Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project Region	Sittwe, Pauktaw and Kyauktaw townships
Project Partners	National and International NGOs
Duration and Budget	2016-2023 with a budget of up to Euro 12.9 million
	

Approach

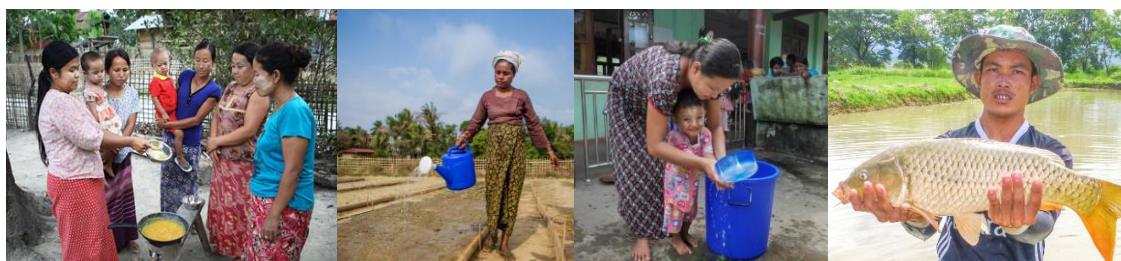
Causes of malnutrition are manifold, and in order to fight it, a multi-sectoral and multi-level approach is required. The project therefore addresses nutrition sensitive and nutrition specific interventions in the following interlinked sectors: nutrition and nutrition relevant health, agriculture, sustainable aquaculture as well as water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH). The project is further elaborating **synergies** between the interlinked sectors as e.g.:

- Drinking water supply → increased aquaculture production facilities
- Increased availability of aquatic proteins → improved nutrition status (1000 days approach)
- Processing and value adding → food availability, nutrition security and increased income

The implementation is done jointly with national and international project partners: Consortium of Dutch NGOs (CDN-ZOA), WaterAid, Action Contre la Faim (ACF) Myanmar Health Assistant Association (MHAA) and Action for Green Earth (AGE) and others.

Key Activities

The project targets 66 villages with a total population of around 59,000 people in in Sittwe, Kyauktaw and Pauktaw Townships in Rakhine State, with a focus on the approximately 12,800 women of reproductive age (15-49 years) and 3,000 children under the age of two years living there. The project comprises four interlinked areas of activity:



Contact Person

Dr. Florian Muehlbauer
Head of Project
florian.muehlbauer@giz.de

Nutrition

Increasing the diversity of food production in the target areas by providing technical advice and agricultural inputs to promote the cultivation and utilization of nutrient-rich vegetables and fruits in their home gardens and facilitating cooking demonstrations for women to gain knowledge on nutritious food items including fish through *nutrition awareness sessions*.

Health

Improving the access to and quality of advisory services with regards to nutrition-relevant basic health services by constructing and renovating sub rural health centers, strengthening the competences of health advisory actors in the sector and contributing to the health, nutrition, hygiene awareness campaigns to the communities. COVID-19 prevention activities like community handwashing stations and IEC materials are distributed in the project villages.

Water and Sanitation, Hygiene (WASH)

Enhancing drinking water facilities and their maintenance and improving hygiene practices by rehabilitating and upgrading water facilities, by drilling deep wells and small piped water distribution systems, providing water filters, and constructing low-cost sanitary latrines for the communities and schools.

Sustainable Aquaculture

Aims at poverty reduction and improving nutritional status of local population through increasing sustainable aquaculture by building capacity of local small-scale fish farmers (SFF) and processors **on best production methods, post-harvest handling and processing** of aquaculture products. Trainings will be conducted along the whole production cycle. 300,000 Juveniles will be distributed to inland freshwater SSF in a **polyculture system** with 3 different fish species and the distribution of feed and other production materials. **5,000,000 black tiger shrimp larvae** are distributed from local hatcheries to SSF producing in **mangrove friendly aquaculture** supported communities.

Our achievements



Our achievements



Our achievements



Our preliminary targets:

- > **4.000 hectares** in 3 townships have enhanced sustainable aquaculture production methods through trainings and workshops
- > **300 stakeholders** are trained on hygiene processing, food safety and higher value adding
- > **70 farmer families** in **33 villages** get supported to produce high quality aquaculture products on **24 hectares**
- > **10 mangrove friendly aquaculture plots** and **8 small scale feed mills** have been installed
- > **46.500 community members** have better access to aquatic proteins and are educated about healthy diets through **aquaculture nutrition awareness sessions**

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Registered offices Bonn and Eschborn, Germany
Food and Nutrition Security in Rakhine State
No. 446, Pyi Htaung Su Street
Pyi Taw Thar Quarter, Sittwe, Myanmar
T +95 43 23258
giz-myanmar@giz.de
www.giz.de

Author(s) Dr. Florian Muehlbauer, Ilka Jaeger

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Division Crisis Management; Transitional Development
Assistance; Reconstruction; Infrastructure in Crisis
Situations

Addresses of the BMZ offices

BMZ Bonn
Dahlmannstraße 4
53113 Bonn, Germany
T +49 (0)228 99 535-0
F +49 (0)228 99 535-3500
www.bmz.de

BMZ Berlin
Stresemannstraße 94
10963 Berlin, Germany
T +49 (0)30 18 535-0
F +49 (0)30 18 535-2501