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FISH FOR LIVELIHOODS

Annual Progress Report

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Acronyms

<i>Activity</i>	Feed the Future Burma Fish for Livelihoods Activity
AP	Aquaculture Promoter
AYO	Ar Yone Oo Social Development Association (Partner)
BAP	Better Aquaculture Practices
BMP	Better Management Practices
BRAC	A proper noun representing the organization, rather than its original meaning
Burma	Myanmar
CBO	Community Based Organization
CF	Community Facilitator
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DOF	Department of Fisheries
DTP	Data Tools Package
EAO	Ethnic Armed Organizations
FCR	Feed Conversion Ratio
FRB	Farmer Record Book
FY	Fiscal Year
GAD	General Administration Department
GDNR	Foreign Assistance Indicators related to Gender
GEI	Gender Equity and Inclusion
GIFT	Genetically Improved Farmed Tilapia
HH	Household
HQ	WorldFish Headquarters
IEC	Information Education and Communication
IECT	Information Education Communication and Training
IP	Implementing Partner
IR	Intermediate Result
IWMI	International Water Management Institute (Partner)
KMSS	Karuna Mission Social Solidarity (Partner)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDDW	Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women
MEL	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
MF	Myanmar Fisheries Federation (Partner)
MOU	Memorandum of understanding
MSA	Market-Based System Approaches

MSD	Market System Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSPAW	National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women
PCA	Participatory Community Appraisal
PDF	People's Defence Force
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PSEA	Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse
Q1	October - December 2023
Q2	January - March 2024
Q3	April – June 2024
Q4	July – September 2024
SAC	State Administrative Council
SBCC	Social Behaviour Change Communication
SIS	Small Indigenous Fish Species\
SSA	Small-Scale Aquaculture
ToT	Training of Trainers
USAID	United State Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
USG	United State Government
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
FY	Fiscal Year

1. Summary

The annual progress report for the financial year 2024 (October 2023 to September 2024) details the achievements and challenges faced by smallholder fish farmers in Myanmar under the Feed the Future Burma Fish for Livelihoods Activity (F4L). The Activity realized interventions in five new townships, supporting first-time farmers with a proven aquaculture model. Despite ongoing conflict affecting some activities, F4L successfully completed work in 36 townships with a 93% burn rate, while a 7% underspend was mainly due to travel disruptions for Implementing Partners caused by flooding.

During FY 2024, F4L selected 1,151 new SSA farmers (790 male, 361 female) from 24 townships, providing support including fish seeds, training, and WASH materials. Previous SSA farmers received 50% of their input costs this year. F4L distributed fish seed to 1,907 farmers, including 31% women, and encouraged 1,132 farmers to adopt Better Management Practices (BMPs). In total, 1,565 farmers (1,058 male, 507 female) harvested their ponds, achieving an average yield of 1,900 kg/ha, excluding those affected by floods and theft. Additionally, 1,466 farmers shifted from subsistence to commercial aquaculture.

F4L built the capacity of input service providers, establishing seven new feed mills and a total of 32 since the Activity's inception. A total of 691 farmers (458 male, 233 female) received feed from these mills, which used local ingredients to make feed more affordable. F4L-supported hatcheries produced 171 million fish seed accessible to both participants and non-participants of F4L.

In FY 2024, F4L facilitated micro-credit access for 993 small-scale farmers and fisherfolk, helping them increase their incomes and invest in fisheries-related businesses, generating USD 1,198,468 in sales value, with around 34% of women benefiting.

F4L also provided extensive training, reaching 2,220 farmers and their households on topics such as SSA modules, fish processing, and water quality management. Capacity building extended to 117 staff members (53% female) from WorldFish and sub-grantees. Additionally, the Activity disseminated educational materials and provided digital resources, leading to 139 fish-farming advisory posts viewed 4.4 million times.

The consortium formed to enhance organizational capacity conducted workshops with three local organizations, with 80% reporting increased overall capacity. F4L also supported various WASH and nutrition programs, including the installation of toilets in 106 households, improving sanitation for 472 family members. A survey revealed that 90% of households had access to handwashing facilities, and F4L encouraged integrated farming practices among farmers.

The IWMI team published guidelines on water quality and developed an online decision support tool for aquaculture suitability, aiding market growth potential for fish farmers. In addition, the team developed an online dashboard version of an aquaculture suitability decision support tool/model (DST) – Aqua-DST, which helps decide the suitability for small-scale aquaculture (SSA) at the township level.

WorldFish's MEL team enhanced partner capacities through workshops, conducted surveys on BMP impacts, and promoted gender awareness through events like International Women's Day. The F4L burn rate was an impressive 93%, despite challenging conditions.

A MMK20 million revolving credit fund for 34 female and one male fish vendors was established by MFF in Southern Shan State.

In the upcoming year, the local organization Ar Yon Oo will take over most implementation responsibilities from BRAC, ensuring continued support for farmers and their families.

Table 1 Performance Indicators Targets and Achievements of Fish for Livelihoods

Indicator	Baseline (FY 2020)	Oct 2023 to Sep 2024 (FY 2024)	Oct 2021 to Sep 2027		Oct 2019 to Sep 2027	
		Achievement of Reporting Period	Target	Achievement as of Sep 2024	Overall Target	Achievement as of Sep 2024
EG.3-2: Number of individuals participating in USG food security programs [IM-level]	0	7,099 (Male=4535, Female=2564)	12,000 = 6,000 SSA Farmers and 6,000 others	16,576 (Male=10486, Female=6090)	16,000 (a) = 8,000 SSA Farmers and 8,000 others	22,007 (Male=14046, Female=7961)
EG. 3-10, -11, -12: Yield (i.e., production/unit area) of targeted agricultural commodities among program participants with USG assistance	1,599 kg/ha	1900 (kg/ha)	10% increase from the baseline	1,881 (kg/ha)	10% increase from the baseline	1,857 (kg/ha)
Custom 1.1: Number of farmers shifted from subsistence to commercial aquaculture practices	0	1466 (Male = 980, Female = 486)	5,175	5114 (Male = 3695, Female = 1419)	6,375	5,743 (Male=4222, Female= 1521)
E.G., 3.2-24: Number of individuals in the agriculture system who have applied improved management practices or technologies with USG assistance	15%	1,132 (Male=769, Female=363)	6,600	3,199 (Male = 2263, Female = 936)	9,000	4,594 (Male=3413, Female=1181)
EG. 4.2-7: Number of individuals participating in USG-assisted group-based savings, micro-finance or lending programs [IM-level]	13%	993 (Male = 660, Female = 333)	30% of 12,000 = 3,600	2,255 (Male = 1613, Female = 642)	30% of farmers and fishers of 16,000 (a)	2,726 (Male=2017, Female=709)
Custom 1.4: Number of fry and fingerlings produced by the hatcheries/nurseries supported	0	171 million seeds (170,698,000 hatchery + 329,886	1,200 million seeds	926 million seeds	1,200 million seeds	1,152 million seeds

Indicator	Baseline (FY 2020)	Oct 2023 to Sep 2024 (FY 2024)	Oct 2021 to Sep 2027		Oct 2019 to Sep 2027	
		Achievement of Reporting Period	Target	Achievement as of Sep 2024	Overall Target	Achievement as of Sep 2024
		nursery = 171,027,886)				
Custom 1.5 Number of households accessing quality feed and feed ingredients through the newly established feed traders and feed mills	0	691 (Male=458, Female=233)	3,600 households (direct)	4,153 (Male=2675, Female=1,478)	4,800 households (direct)	4,153 (Male=2675, Female=1,478)
CBLD-9: Percent of USG-assisted organizations with improved performance [IM-level]	0	80% (3 entities)	75%	80%	75% organization/ CBOs/ Institutions	80%
Custom 1.6 Number of non-participants (indirect beneficiaries) engaged and assisted by the <i>Activity</i>	0	4,245 (Disaggregates not available)	28,000	24,289 (Male=10,398, Female=6,875, Disaggregates not available= 7,016)	28,000	24,289 (Male=10,398, Female=6,875, Disaggregates not available= 7,016)
EG.3.2-26: Value of annual sales of producers and firms receiving USG assistance [IM-level]	N/A	1 million \$ (Male = 1672, Female =862)	17 million \$	4.4 million \$	22 million \$	6.1 million \$
Custom 2.1: Number of farmers groups selling fish and fish products using BMPs (Best Management Practices)	0	No farmer groups	25	3 farmer groups	25 groups	07 farmer groups
Custom 2.2: Number of food processors improved their processing practices	0	6 (Female)	90	40 (Male=4, Female=36)	90	40 (Male=4, Female=36)

Indicator	Baseline (FY 2020)	Oct 2023 to Sep 2024 (FY 2024)	Oct 2021 to Sep 2027		Oct 2019 to Sep 2027	
		Achievement of Reporting Period	Target	Achievement as of Sep 2024	Overall Target	Achievement as of Sep 2024
GNDR 2: Percentage of female participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources [IM-level]	0	34%	35%	36%	35%	32%
HL.8.2-2: Number of people gaining access to a basic sanitation service as a result of USG assistance [IM-level]	0	472 (Male=230, Female=242)	2800	1,860 (Male=909, Female= 951)	2800	2,727 (Male=1346, Female= 1381)
HL.8.2-5: Percent of households with soap and water at a handwashing station on premises [IM-level]	80%	90%	100%	95%	100%	96%
EG.3.3-10: Percent of female participants of USG nutrition-sensitive agriculture activities consuming a diet of minimum diversity [IM-level]	59%	81%	80%	66%	80%	68%

2. Introduction

Since September 15, 2021, Feed the Future Fish for Livelihoods (F4L) has operated under a USAID reimbursement funding model with a USD 17 million grant until September 14, 2027. F4L aims to enhance the nutrition of small-scale farmers, value chain operators, fisherfolk, and vulnerable populations in Central and Northern Burma through inclusive and sustainable aquaculture. Led by WorldFish, the program collaborates with local partners, including Ar Yone Oo, KMSS, and MFF, and works alongside the International Water Management Institute (IWMI).

Goals and Objectives

F4L seeks to transform aquatic food production by fostering inclusive small-scale aquaculture, improving income and nutrition for vulnerable groups. The main goal is to promote sustainable aquaculture growth, enhancing dietary diversity and reducing poverty, particularly among women and children.

To achieve this, F4L aims to:

1. Increase access to nutritious food through enhanced incomes from improved aquaculture and integrated agriculture (rice-fish-vegetable systems). Ten better management practices (BMP) are promoted including: good fishpond location, pond preparation, water quality monitoring, fish species selection, fish seed quality, pond fertilization, use of permitted disease control drugs, use of quality fish feed, use of probiotics, and post-harvest quality control.
2. Change household decision-making regarding nutrition by utilizing homegrown foods and local markets.
3. Promote fish culture technologies to improve food security by generating income, creating jobs, and increasing food supply.

Targets

The F4L targets for smallholder farmers and fisherfolk in five selected States/Regions, can be seen at table 1 above aiming to reach at least 16,000 farmers. Support includes fish stock management, better practices, credit access, and market opportunities, with a goal of a 10% annual yield increase from a baseline of 1,599 kg/hectare.

The program also focuses on enhancing market systems by linking market actors like hatcheries and retailers to boost sales, targeting USD 10 million in sales within six years.

Additionally, F4L promotes nutrition and WASH practices through education and resource distribution, specifically targeting women and children under five in deprived households.

3. Approach

The WorldFish mission in Burma focuses on the improved production of aquatic food for enhanced human nutrition through Small-Scale Aquaculture (SSA) and small-scale artisanal fisheries both inland (freshwater) and inshore (coastal and estuarine). Small-scale farmers are among the most vulnerable groups to external shocks and there are no sufficient measures and strong enough institutions to create safety nets and protection. Therefore, the small-scale aquaculture sector in the country continues to be lacking in development and stability, putting at risk the livelihoods of the ones affected. The country has great potential for growth and can achieve much by being equipped with the necessary technological, financial, and policy resources to reform itself.

Smallholder farmers, typically rice farmers, may participate in activities related to rice-fish or freshwater aquaculture. Nonetheless, the aquaculture environment they are involved with, presents multiple barriers, such as limited fish species diversification and lack of quality fish seed, land and water use regulations, unsustainable practices, low productivity, limited market access and the impacts of climate change. Adjusting to these circumstances for better outcomes would enhance the aquaculture potential and the sub-sector's capacity to meet the growing fish demand, while also enhancing the well-being of impoverished small-scale farmers.

4. Geographical focus

F4L focuses on five inland states and regions in Central and Northern Burma:

- Central Dry Zone: Mandalay, Magway and Sagaing
- North: Shan (East and South) and Kachin

These areas present more challenges to aquaculture development and livelihood opportunities. The growth in aquaculture can play an important role in changing this scenario by increasing production and income opportunities. Figure 1 shows the Activity townships and numbers of beneficiaries within the selected States/Regions where the Activity operates in Burma.

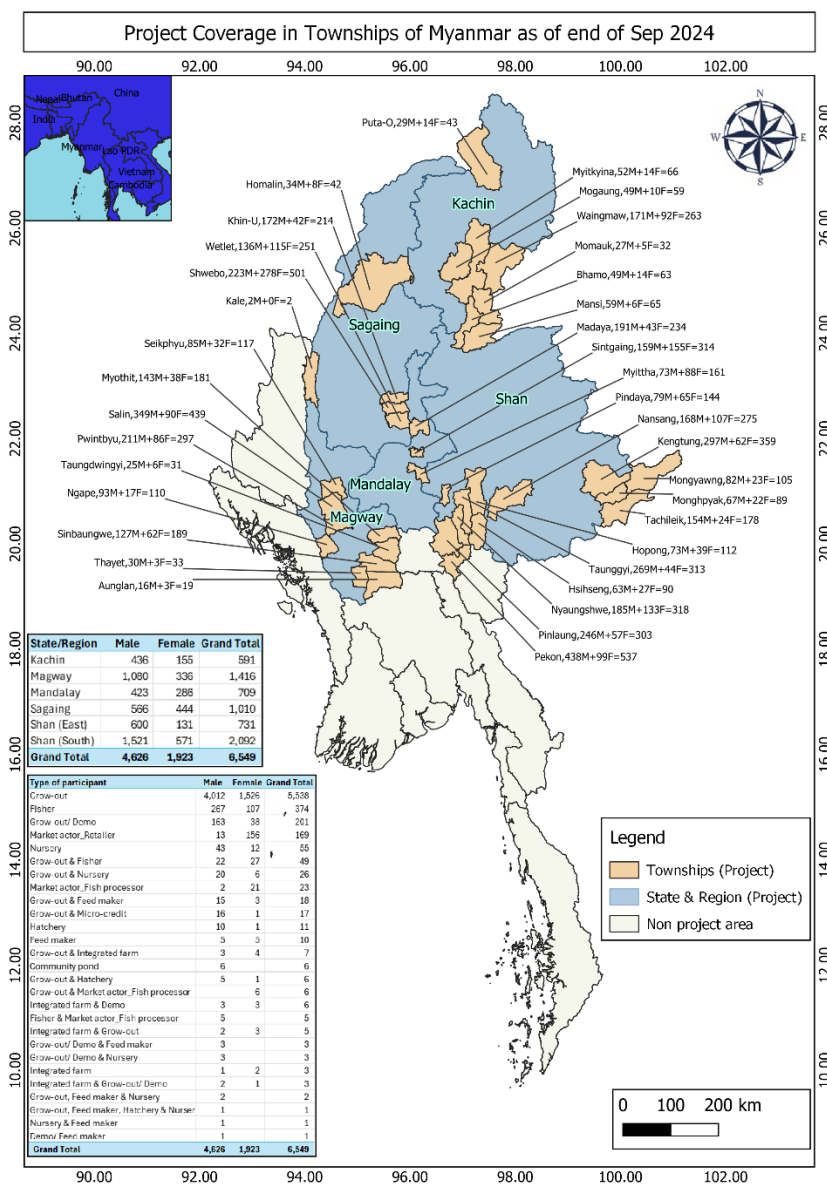


Figure 1 A map showing areas of intervention across Five Regions/States and beneficiary numbers

7. Work plan progress

IR 1. Small-scale aquaculture production increased by improved land and water use and increased access to information, high-quality inputs, and credit.

Sub-IR 1.1 An enabling environment is created to increase the engagement of farmers in commercial aquaculture production (water and land use and market knowledge)

Context: The Activity moves on to the provision of extension services and technical support to the Y3 and Y2 SSA farmers. The selection of new townships for Y3 is summarized in the table below listing the numbers of villages and SSA farmers selected included.

Progress: Small-scale aquaculture Training of Trainers (ToT) sessions were offered to selected Aquaculture Promoters in the Activity intervention areas.

Table 2 Numbers of new farmers in Y3

States/ Regions	Township	Numbers of Village	Numbers of New SSA Farmer
Kachin	Bhamo	4	6
	Mansi	2	14
	Mogaung	2	16
	Momauk	4	8
	Myitkyina	5	12
	Waingmaw	10	55
Sub-total		27	111
Mandalay	Myittha*	6	151
	Singaing	6	87
Sub-total		12	238
Magwe	Aung Lan*	3	19
	Myothit	4	58
	Pwint Phyu	2	28
	Taungdwingyi	2	11
	Thayet*	3	29
	Seikphyu	3	66
	Sinbaungwe	8	65
Sub-total		25	276
Sagaing	Homalin*	8	40
	Shwebo	12	31
Sub-total		20	71
Eastern Shan	Mongyawng	8	42
	Kengtung	19	106
Sub-total		27	148
Southern Shan	Hopong	4	62
	Phekon	11	45
	Pinlaung	7	27
	Taunggyi	5	100
Sub-total		27	234
Grand Total		138	1078

*New townships

Sub-IR 1.2 Efficiency of aquaculture production increased systems

Context: To enhance the efficiency of small-scale aquaculture and integrated agriculture production systems, providing farmers with the necessary tools and materials is essential. By distributing equipment such as hoes, pickaxes, reaping hooks, and others, both demonstration farmers and SSA farmers were supported in improving productivity. This initiative aligns with the goal of fostering sustainable agricultural practices and promoting circular economy principles within local farming communities. In the face of climate change, small-scale aquaculture farmers in Shwe Bo and Homalin require support to adapt to changing environmental conditions. By enhancing their understanding of sustainable water and land management practices and providing training on market knowledge, MFF Sagaing aims to empower farmers to increase their productivity and resilience. This initiative is crucial for ensuring food security and improving livelihoods among local communities.

Progress: The Activity has encouraged farmers to adopt more sustainable practices, contributing to the overall goals of integrating aquaculture and agriculture for better resource management. The extension of SSA Module training sessions focuses on sustainable land and water management practices. Additionally, resources and technical support were provided to assist SSA farmers in adopting the best aquaculture practices. Hence, MFF Sagaing reported a 20% increase in fish production across participating farms in its intervention areas. MFF Kachin could have supported the total 1.95 acres of demonstration ponds, and 6,300 fish stocked mentioned below.

A preliminary data collection survey was carried out in Hopong by MFF Southern Shan to identify new participants for the Activity's next phase. The survey initially identified 85 potential farmers. Afterward, Activity staff engaged with these farmers individually, guiding them through essential pond preparation, and involvement in the Activity. As a result, a final group of 72 participants, consisting of 20 men and 52 women, was confirmed as the Activity's beneficiaries. Following this selection, the SSA committee was formed to manage and oversee the initiative, ensuring implementation and continued support for the farmers.

Best Management Practices (BMPs) guidelines development for nurseries, hatcheries, and feed millers

Best Management Practices (BMP) support SSA farmers, hatcheries, nurseries, and feed mills in boosting the productivity, profitability, and sustainability of fish farming and manufacturing processes while ensuring safer food and better nutrition for the consumers. Data collection to produce safe fish and fish products by SSA farmers, the Activity developed BMP checklists and monitored SSA farmers at all stages of their farming practices, from pond preparations to fish marketing, to increase production, encourage more efficient resource use and management, and ensure safe farm-to-plate fish production. To confirm a pond, a hatchery, a nursery, and a feed mill as BMP friendly, a farmer must comply with 30 - 50% of BMP parameters. BMP checklists were designated to measure farmers' adoption of BMP practices, and the Activity checked farmers' practices against the checklists. The checklists are in Annex 1.

Sub-IR 1.3 Increased access to credit and financial instruments

Context: Increasing financial resources can enhance the purchasing power of SSA farmers, allowing them to acquire additional inputs such as fingerlings, and feed. These inputs lead to improved productivity and, consequently, higher outputs and income for farmers. Ar Yone Oo implements two key interventions: providing cash grants to small-scale aquaculture growers and nursery farmers, and establishing a community-managed revolving fund, also known as a farmers' group revolving fund. These cash grants and revolving funds are interconnected, offering complementary support to farmers.

The goal of the SSA group fund is to provide loans to SSA farmers for fish farm investments such as acquiring farm materials, labor costs, and services. The loan will only be used to invest in a fish farm. Following the formation of farmer groups, the Activity supported cash grants (subsidies) to SSA

farmers. Each farmer then contributed 5-10% of his or her cash grant to the SSA group fund, which is then loaned to member farms. Saving is a one-time event (no more monthly saving). The SSA group committee oversees the revolving fund process. After a member meeting, the committee will keep the group fund and make loans to farmers. The committee will then collect the repayment following the schedule. The loan duration varies by group (1 - 6 months). The interest rate is also variable, ranging from 0.5 to 5% per month. When the loan term expires, the borrower only has to pay it back once. There is no set repayment plan and borrowers must repay both principal and interest at the same time. Late repayment penalties must be paid.

Progress: Farmer subsidy provision

As a subsidy for farmers, grant provision was continued in Year 3. Four types of farmer grants were supported to Activity participants. Grow-out farmer grants, nursery farmer grants, fisherman grants, and black soldier fly demonstration farmer grants were provided to compensate for the expenses during this economic downfall period. Of the SSA grow-out farmer grant, each farmer received 90,000 MMK and each farmer saved 40,000 MMK as a membership fee for SSA revolving group fund. Each SSA farmer was provided 60,000 MMK and they saved it all for a revolving fund. Nursery farmers received 800,000 MMK for cost-sharing for pond preparation, fish seed, feed, nets, and oxygen cylinders. Each one of the black soldier fly farmers supported 1,000,000 MMK to make good in seed, feed, building, and other farm inputs.

Table 3 Year 3 farmer subsidy provision by farmer type and township

Sr.	Township	Type of participants	Nos. of beneficiaries			Total MMK
			Male	Female	Total	
1	Sinbaungwe	Fishermen	48	34	82	4,920,000
2	Sinbaungwe	Grow-out farmer	56	9	65	5,850,000
3	Pwintbyu	Grow-out farmer	15	13	28	2,520,000
4	Seikphyu	Grow-out farmer	40	26	66	5,940,000
5	Myothit	Grow-out farmer	41	17	58	5,220,000
6	Taungdwingyi	Grow-out farmer	8	3	11	990,000
7	Aunglan	Grow-out farmer	16	3	19	1,710,000
8	Thayet	Grow-out farmer	27	2	29	2,610,000
9	Sinbaungwe	Nursey farmer	1	1	2	1,600,000
10	Thayet	Nursey farmer	1	1	2	1,600,000
11	Taungdwingyi	Black soldier fly demo farmer	1	0	1	1,000,000
12	Salin	Black soldier fly demo farmer	1	0	1	1,000,000
			255	109	364	34,960,000

Source: AYO

Status of Grow-out Farmer Fund Groups

SSA grow-out farmers established revolving fund groups to enable members to invest in their fish farming businesses through loans from their group funds. Throughout Year 3, supervision and data collection continued for the SSA grow-out fund groups formed in Years 3, 4, and 5. A total of 26 new fund groups were created by farmers selected in Year 3 across 7 Activity townships, bringing the total to 55 fund groups under the Activity's supervision.

In Year 3, 607 members participated in these 55 fund groups, with 442 farmers receiving 742 loans totaling 53,752,300 MMK. Notably, 27.4% (121 out of 442) of loan recipients were women, enhancing their opportunities to pursue entrepreneurial ventures in fish farming.

Interest rates for the fund groups range from 2% to 5% per month, with loan amounts varying between 10,000 MMK and 320,000 MMK. Loan terms differ as well, spanning from 2 to 5 months. Additionally, some groups voluntarily collect extra savings from members, although this is not mandatory and depends on the economic status and mutual agreement of all members.

Table 4 Revolving of Grow-out Farmers Fund Groups in Y3

Township	Batch	Nos. of fund groups	Male	Female	Members (Total)	Nos. of loans taken	Nos. of loan clients	Loan amount (MMK)
Salin	Y2	7	82	17	99	141	72	6,645,500
Seikphyu	Y2	1	8	0	8	3	2	375,000
Myothit	Y2	1	8	1	9	1	1	130,000
Pwintbyu	Y3	8	64	41	105	192	92	8,787,800
Myothit	Y3	4	31	11	42	48	25	4,307,000
Seikphyu	Y3	2	24	6	30	16	15	2,894,000
Sinbaungwe	Y3	5	23	16	39	69	34	4,812,000
Taungdwingyi	Y3	1	6	2	8	21	7	1,358,000
Seikphyu	Y2	5	40	26	66	27	26	5,329,000
Pwintbyu	Y2	2	41	17	58	28	27	2,795,000
Myothit	Y2	4	15	13	28	52	40	5,347,000
Taungdwingyi	Y2	2	56	9	65	8	7	1,028,000
Sinbaungwe	Y2	8	8	3	11	86	59	6,236,000
Aunglan	Y2	3	16	3	19	30	15	1,788,000
Thayet	Y2	2	18	2	20	20	20	1,920,000
		55	440	167	607	742	442	53,752,300

Source: AYO

In comparison to the starting capital of 14,160,000 MMK, the total current fund of these 55 fund groups from 8 Activity townships is reached at 23,952,050 MMK. This represents an increase of approximately 69% in the fund. The growth of funds differs among the groups and depends on life span, loan duration, and interest rate.

Table 5 Fund Growth of Years 1, 2 and 3 Fund Groups

Township	Y	Groups	Start-up capital (Member fees) (MMK)	Total Saving	Interest	Other income	Expense	Current Total Fund (MMK)	Fund Growth (%)
Salin	Y1	7	1,000,000	647,200	923,250	5,900	1,000	2,575,350	158
Seikphyu	Y1	1	80,000	-	59,450	-	2,200	137,250	72
Myothit	Y1	1	100,000	-	72,200	-	6,000	166,200	66
Pwintbyu	Y2	8	1,050,000	1,332,000	516,250	8,900	38,900	2,868,250	173
Myothit	Y2	4	420,000	810,000	298,800	-	408,700	1,120,100	167
Seikphyu	Y3	2	300,000	450,000	210,160	140	-	960,300	220
Sinbaungwe	Y3	5	390,000	960,000	305,400	7,800	6,300	1,656,900	325
Taungdwingyi	Y3	1	140,000	210,000	98,550	-	-	448,550	220

Township	Y	Groups	Start-up capital (Member fees) (MMK)	Total Saving	Interest	Other income	Expense	Current Total Fund (MMK)	Fund Growth (%)
Seikphyu	Y2	5	2,640,000	366,000	161,400	10,000	-	3,177,400	20
Myothit	Y2	4	2,320,000	348,000	208,250	-	-	2,876,250	24
Pwintbyu	Y2	2	1,120,000	258,000	99,750	-	-	1,477,750	32
Sinbaungwe	Y2	8	2,600,000	483,000	261,300	-	-	3,344,300	29
Taungdwin gyi	Y2	2	440,000	440,000	58,050	-	-	938,050	113
Aunglan	Y2	3	760,000	305,000	75,600	-	-	1,140,600	50
Thayet	Y2	2	800,000	200,000	64,800			1,064,800	33
		55	14,160,000	6,809,200	3,413,210	32,740	463,100	23,952,050	69

Source: AYO

Status of Fisherfolk Fund Groups in Y3

For livelihood improvement and fishery resources management purposes, the artisanal fisher's community from Sinbaungwe township was provided monetary support. A total of 82 families from one ward in Sinbaungwe were selected and provided 60,000 MMK per family. A total amount of 4,920,000 MMK was provided to 82 fishermen as the start-up capital of the revolving fund. Starting in January 2024, the committees of fisherfolk fund groups started collecting money and lend out to member fishermen. They had already completed the 3rd cycle of fund disbursement. 77 members had taken out 190 loan equivalents to 17,597,000 MMK from the group fund and the interest rate is 1% per month. The loan duration is 4 months.

Table 6 Fund Revolving of Fisherfolk Groups in Y3

Township	Batch	Name of group	No. of loans	No. of loan clients	Loan amount (MMK)
Sinbaungwe	Y3	Shwe Ayar	90	38	8,737,000
Sinbaungwe	Y3	Shwe Ngar	100	39	8,860,000
			190	77	17,597,000

Source: AYO

The 82 members of the fisherfolk group had a saving of 1,170,000 MMK within three fund cycles, the interest received amount is 670,800 MMK and the total current fund amount of those two fund groups is 6,699,600 MMK. (Shwe Ayar group provided 61,200 MMK as healthcare assistance for two member fishermen).

Table 7 Fund Status of Fisherfolk Fund Groups in Y3

Township	Name of group	Total start-up capital	Total Saving	Interest	Other income	Expense	Total amount of fund
Sinbaungwe	Shwe Ayar	2,460,000	560,000	440,800	-	61,200	3,399,600
Sinbaungwe	Shwe Ngar	2,460,000	610,000	230,000	-	-	3,300,000
		4,920,000	1,170,000	670,800	-	61,200	6,699,600

Source: AYO

Group Fund Management Training for Fund Groups

For the members of the fund management committee of fund groups functioned in Y3, the fund management training was conducted in Activity townships. In this reporting period, a total of 6 sessions of fund management refresher training were achieved for Y2 and Y3 fund committees (23 fund committees) and 18 sessions of fund management training were given to 28 fund committees of grow-out and fisherfolk fund groups newly formed in Y3. The contents of each training session are the responsibilities of committee members, basic bookkeeping, and by-law development of the fund group, given to the committee members to help them manage their funds effectively. A total of 163 committee members (Male- 119, Female – 44) from 51 fund groups attended the one-day in-person training. The 27% of participants (44/163) are women, demonstrating that Activity beneficiaries are acquiring agency and developing skills in financial management and leadership through fund groups.

Table 8 Participants of Group Fund Management Training by townships

Type of training	Batch	Township	Nos. of training session	Nos. of the fund committee	Participants		
					Male	Female	Total
Fund management refresher training	Y2	Salin	1	3	7	2	9
	Y3	Taungdwingyi	1	5	12	3	15
	Y3	Salin	2	8	15	9	24
	Y3	Seikphyu	1	2	6	0	6
	Y3	Sinbaungwe	1	5	9	6	15
Fund management training (fresher)	Y2	Salin	1	2	4	2	6
	Y2	Seikphyu	2	5	8	7	15
	Y2	Taungdwingyi	1	6	15	3	18
	Y2	Sinbaungwe	9	10	30	10	40
	Y2	Aunglan	3	3	8	1	9
	Y2	Thayet	2	2	5	1	6
			24	51	119	44	163

Source: AYO

Sub-IR 1.4 Increased access to fish seed through engaging and strengthening linkages between private and public sector

Context: To improve the availability and access to quality fish seed, it is crucial to empower farmers with the knowledge and skills necessary for effective breeding techniques, and nursery operations. The induced breeding training provides educating SSA farmers which leads to increased fish production and good-quality seeds. By fostering partnerships with the private sector, the aquaculture ecosystems are enhanced by ensuring farmers are well-equipped to meet the production targets. Nursery operation plays a key role in enhancing fish stocking in ponds to gain the benefits of fish farming and increasing good health fish populations before harvest.

Progress: Six sessions of hands-on induced breeding training were offered in five intervention states and regions in Year 3. The three-day induced breeding training was conducted by MFF Sagaing in technical support of a Field Coordinator from WorldFish, targeting SSA farmers in Shwebo in May 2024. The training attracted a total of 14 participants, comprising 12 males and 2 females. Participants gained hands-on experience and theoretical knowledge about effective breeding techniques. Feedback from attendees highlighted a better understanding of induced breeding methods and their potential to enhance fish seed production in their farms, thereby contributing to the sustainability and productivity of their aquaculture practices.

Table 9 Numbers of hands-on training on induced breeding of common carp to SSA farmers and nursery operators

State	Venue	Date from	Date to	Implementing Partner (IP)
Eastern Shan	Kengtung	22 February 2024	23 February 2024	KMSS
	Mongphyat	25 February 2024	26 February 2024	
Magwe	Taungdwingyi	1 April 2024	2 April 2024	AYO
Kachin	Myitkyina	4 April 2024	5 April 2024	MFF Kachin
Sagaing	Shwebo	14 May 2024	16 May 2024	MFF Sagaing
Mandalay	Mandalay	11 June 2024	12 June 2024	BRAC

Table 10 Numbers of hatchery production by WorldFish and its implementation partners in Year 3

Organization	State/Region	Township	Production	Sum of Quantity
BRAC	Sagaing	Khin-U	Egg production	23350510
			Hatchling	1050000
			Fry	900000
			Fingerling	50000
KMSS_Pekon	Shan (South)	Pinlaung	Egg production	1500
			Fry	10000
			Fingerling	10000
MFF_Kachin	Kachin	Myitkyina	Egg production	2700000
			Hatchling	1400000
			Fry	700000
			Fingerling	50000
PACT	Magway	Taungdwingyi	Egg production	5100000
			Hatchling	1240000
			Fry	920000
			Fingerling	455000
WorldFish	Mandalay	Madaya	Egg production	40000
			Hatchling	28000
			Fry	15000
			Fingerling	-
	Shan (East)	Kengtung	Egg production	66500250
			Hatchling	2470000
			Fry	1750000
			Fingerling	1500000
	Shan (South)	Nyaungshwe	Egg production	96172000
			Hatchling	92496600
			Fry	37382700
			Fingerling	28270700
Grand Total				364562260

The fish stocking started in April and was harvested in July in Kachin. The number of fish harvested from Mogaung Nursery Pond was 14,550 silver barb from 26,000 stocked. The nursery farmer sold all the harvested fish around 2-3 inches at 150 MMK each. For grow-out farmers, the Activity

supported rohu, common carp, grass carp, and silver barb this year. The Activity mainly supports the silver barb with 50 % and the rest are other fish types. This total fish numbers include second-time fingerling distribution to farmers whose ponds were flooded. Thus, MFF Kachin supported 167,275 numbers of total fish seeds to 115 SSA farmers.

MFF Southern Shan reported an estimated harvest of 3,000 fingerlings after stocking 10,000 fry of common carp and grass carp in nursery ponds in six months: from August 8, 2023, to January 28, 2024. It supported 72 farmers in Hopong, by facilitating the acquisition of 71,350 grass carp and common carp fingerlings. Along with distributing fish seed, in-depth training on essential areas such as fishpond maintenance, feeding techniques, water quality management, and basic fish farming methods, ensuring the farmers were well-prepared for aquaculture were offered. Overall, during Year 3, 70 new farmers and 2 demonstration farmers were assisted, with a total of 71,350 fingerlings (3-inch size) distributed in Hopong.

Besides, SSA farmers of Hishseng completed a second stocking cycle, with 37,550 fish seeds distributed across the ponds of 52 farmers. Additionally, 36 farmers affected by flooding in Pindaya also received 32,250 fingerlings, each in size of 2 - 3 inches to support recovery efforts.

Sub-IR 1.5 Increased availability and access to quality affordable feed using agricultural co-products by farmers

Context: 11 major aquaculture feed mills in Myanmar produce floating and sinking pellets, however, there are no guidelines or standards for animal feed in the country, thus feed millers are free to employ any nutritional formula they like. Due to the absence of industry competition, the cost of manufactured pellets is thought to be 10% to 30% more than in other countries in the region. As a result of their high cost, commercial feed pellets are not commonly used. For import restrictions on enriched flours and other essential ingredients, as well as the fact that other livestock sectors absorb the majority of oilseed cakes, the aquaculture sector struggles with an inadequate quantity and quality of feed supply. In the Dry Zone, the Activity educates farmers on feed quality and fosters production and demand for high-quality feeds. To supply high-quality feed, promote the development of the feed market, and empower fish farmers to improve their pellet-feeding practices, the Activity will equip one focal farmer from each of the Activity townships with a mini-pellet feed mill. Currently, almost all of SSA fish farmers in Activity townships use local fish feed, such as rice bran and oil cake. By facilitating a market linkage, the Activity will strengthen the connection between grow-out fish farmers and feed millers.

Progress: Fish feed production was challenging this year because of raw materials price increases, and the unstable political situation in Kachin. The total fish feed production for this Year 3 is 40,753 viss. As MFF Kachin has already handed out the feed mill to one feed miller of Mogaung, the Activity will continuously run fish feed production with 6 feed millers (5 male and 1 female) in the future. The table below lists the fish feed production from 5 feed millers.

Table 11 List of Quarterly Fish Feed Production in Kachin

Sr	Township	Feed Mill	Y3 – Q1 (Oct- Dec)	Y3-Q2 (Jan- Mar)	Y3-Q3 (Apr- Jun)	Y3-Q4 (Jul- Sep)	Total Production (Viss)
1	Myitkyina	U Hpauyu Tu Myat	3089	2072	2300	2620	10081
2	Waingmaw	U Naw Awn	1625	-	-	-	1625
3	Waingmaw	U La Seng	743	646		1554	2943
4	Bhamo	U Myo Myut Aung	648	400	-	-	1048
5	Mansi	U Soe Lwin	299	177	-	-	476
Total			6404	3295	2300	4174	16173

Source: MFF Kachin

MFF Southern Shan recorded 28% protein content in pellet feed produced which a total of 5,814 viss were distributed to 72 SSA farmers in Hopong.

Table 12 Numbers of feed production by WorldFish and its implementation partners in Year 3

Organization	State/Region	Township	Feed Production (Viss)	Feed Production (Kg)
BRAC	Mandalay	Sintgaing	1770	2973.6
	Sagaing	Khin-U	18440	30979.2
		Shwebo	3648.5	6129.48
		Shan (South)	Nansang	40
			Taunggyi	965.625
KMSS Kengtung	Shan (East)	Kengtung	700	1176
			330	554.4
		Tachileik	250	420
			300	504
KMSS Pekon	Shan (South)	Pinlaung	540	907.2
MFF Kachin	Kachin	Bhamo	1048	1760.64
		Mansi	476	799.68
		Myitkyina	10081	16936.08
		Waingmaw	2943	4944.24
			1625	2730
MFF Sagaing	Sagaing	Homalin	1346	2261.28
MFF Southern Shan	Shan (South)	Hsihseng	230	386.4
		Pindaya	1574	2644.32
PACT	Magway	Myothit	585	982.8
		Ngape	316	530.88
		Pwintbyu	1860.74	3126.0432
		Salin	606	1018.08
			819.5	1376.76
WorldFish	Shan (South)	Nyaungshwe	10074	16924.32
Grand Total			60568.365	101754.8532

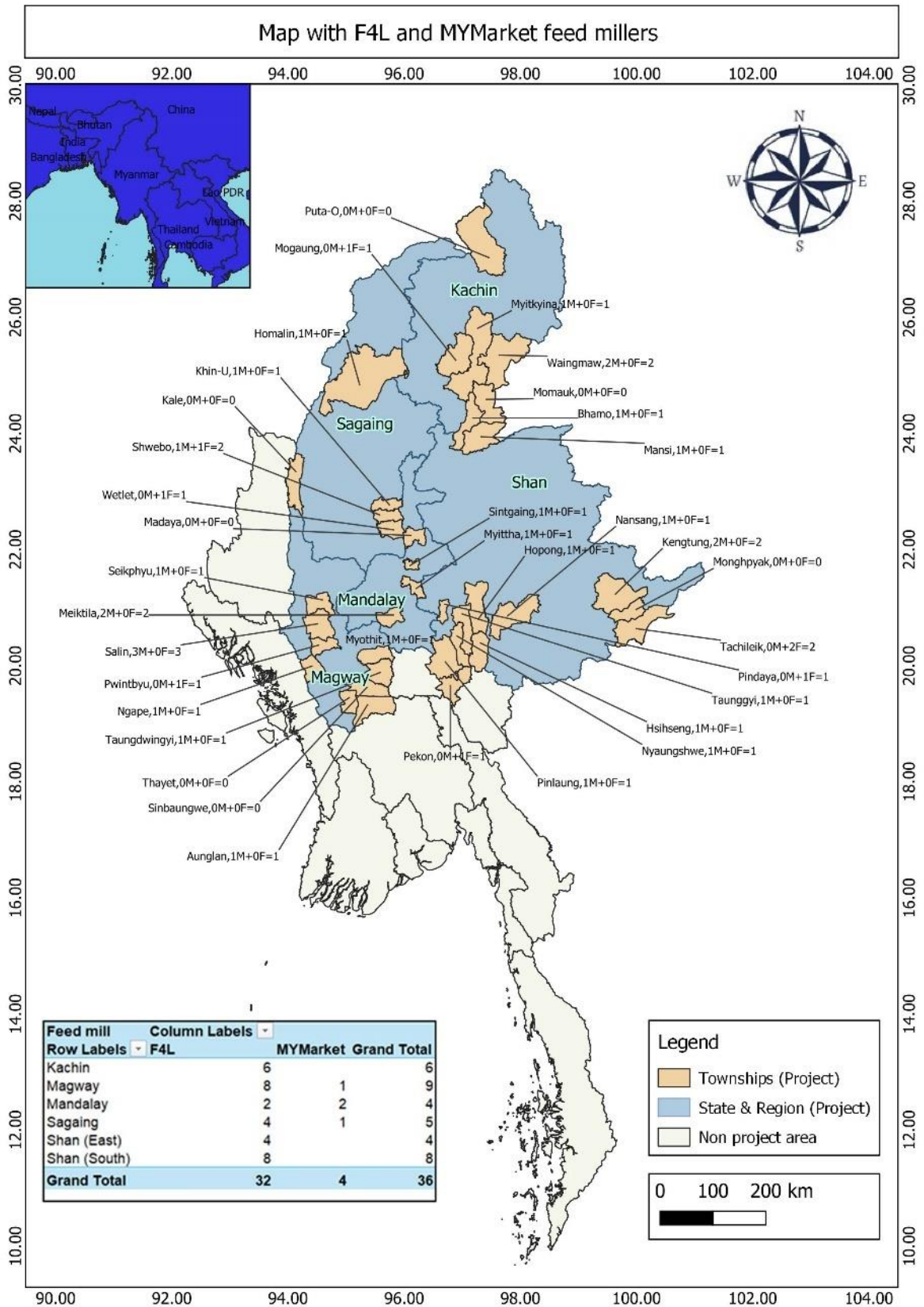


Figure 2 Location of feed mills supported by WorldFish

Sub-IR 1.6 Enhanced capacity and role of MFF and its associations in supporting SSA for improved management practices

Context: MFF-Sagaing, in collaboration with WorldFish, is working to improve nutrition and hygiene practices among SSA farmers and their families. Poor nutrition and hygiene can limit the benefits of improved aquaculture, which is why this component is crucial to the Activity's long-term impact.

Progress: All the Activity participants received Small Scale Aquaculture Module Training throughout the year. We delivered the training with different topics by separating many parts like lecturing on aquaculture and nutrition, presentation by the participants, and discussion sessions with farmers and Activity team members. In the discussion session, we also received participants' feedback and review on the training which is advantageous to delivering upcoming training in a better way for our organization. MFF Sagaing organized gender and nutrition, as well as WASH training sessions targeting SSA farmers in Shwebo and Homalin. These sessions focused on the importance of inclusive practices in aquaculture and the role of women and youth in achieving sustainable production. The training equipped participants with valuable insights into BMPs, emphasizing the significance of gender equality and nutrition in aquaculture. Participants expressed a strong interest in applying what learned is to improve aquaculture practices and community well-being.

MFF Southern Shan participated by sending two staff to the Training of Trainers (ToT) refresher course held in Kengtung. The objective was to enhance the capacity of MFF staff to effectively deliver Gender and Nutrition training as part of the SSA module sessions. This training aimed to equip the staff with the necessary skills and experience to support the implementation of SSA modules seamlessly. Recognizing the need to promote the capacity of SSA farmers, training sessions on SSA businesses, SSA, and nutrition module 1 were conducted Hopong organized by MFF Southern Shan. The face-to-face training sessions were successfully provided with Information Education and Communication (IEC) materials, including notebooks, pens, rulers, and clear bags. The "Fish for Livelihoods" Activity. Through these sessions, newly identified SSA farmers gained essential knowledge on better aquaculture practices (BAPs), human nutrition, and pond dike cropping systems. The training not only served to impart skills but also offered clear guidance on the application of these practices. The acquired knowledge and techniques, when implemented effectively, are poised to have a positive impact on farmers, leading to increased fishpond production. Furthermore, this Activity opens avenues for farmers to opt for an improved, diverse, and balanced diet by incorporating more fish and vegetables into their daily nutrition. The main lecture points are the points to be done when stocking fish seed, to improve the quality of food to improve the growth rate of fish, to prevent fish diseases, the methods to treat if the disease has occurred, and the techniques of maintaining water quality with practical demonstrations. The training guided to tackle key challenges faced by SSA farmers, such as insufficient technical support, knowledge gaps in fish farming practices, farming methods, and issues related to keeping records.

Sub-IR 1.7 Enhanced capacity and role of Inle and Pekhon Lake committees in supporting lake and lake fishers for improved management practices

Capacity building training and workshops for fishers and farmers on nutrition, WASH, gender, food security, SSA, and natural lake conservation in PutaO Township in Kachin

Context: The northern part of Kachin has cool fast-flowing water from the snow-capped Himalayan Mountains, a habitat for many valuable indigenous fish species. Traditional fishing methods tend to overfish these sensitive freshwater systems, hence fisheries co-management, whereby communities work hand-in-hand with local authorities, would be a logical way to sustain the fisheries and provide employment for local youths including women and illicit drug addicts. Aquaculture at the community level through community ponds is a way of providing both employment and improved nutrition to local households where ex-drug addicts are finding it difficult to find work. WorldFish has begun

collaboration and coordination with local CBOs in search of possible opportunities for the development of aquaculture and natural conservation of rivers in PutaO, Kachin.

Progress: WorldFish has intervened in PutaO by offering training and workshops on SSA Modules, nutrition, and WASH activities. A sister pilot project, RESILIENCE has also intervened in PutaO to enhance the implementations. Talks and discussions were made between WorldFish's DCOP and relevant local CSO in PutaO, and a well-known Fauna and Flora International (FFI) in pursuit of possible implementation of fisheries co-management in the district of PutaO. Further action and implementation work will be carried out in the coming Year 4. Gender and inclusion session will take place in Year 4 also with guidance and instructions to be delivered in favor of a newly recruited WorldFish's gender expertise.

IR 2. Increased access to food-safe fish and fish products in the markets

Context: The Activity has supported getting good-quality fingerlings to SSA farmers to produce fresh, good-quality fish and fish products from private hatcheries and nursery operators. After the harvest, the fish are sold in the local market and farm gates or villages at reasonable prices and in good condition.

Progress: It was reported by BRAC that a nursery farmer of Sintgaing successfully harvested and sold 200 Mrigal fingerlings at 100 MMK per each, generating earnings of 20,000 MMK in November 2023. By December 2023, another farmer in the same township sold 1,000 Common Carp and 15,000 Grass Carp at 100 MMK each, generating a total income of 1.6 million kyats. In May 2024, two nursery farmers in Sintgaing produced and sold 3,500 Mrigal fingerlings at a rate of 150 MMK per fingerling, bringing in 525,000 MMK. In July 2024, the same two farmers sold 32,400 Mrigal fingerlings, again priced at 150 MMK each, earning 4.86 million MMK. The following month, another farmer sold 12,000 Mrigal fingerlings at 170 MMK each, earning 2.04 million kyats.

Meanwhile, in Nyaungshwe, a nursery farmer harvested and sold 1,500 Common Carp and 1,300 Grass Carp fingerlings in May 2024, priced at 150 MMK each, resulting in a total income of 420,000 kyats. In July and August 2024, 66 farmers (30 males and 36 females) in Taunggyi, Sintgaing, and Myittha received post-harvest management and value-added training to increase access to safe and high-quality fish and fish products in local markets. The training emphasized proper fish handling, transportation, and processing techniques to ensure food safety and enhance product value.

The Activity staff served as the main facilitators for a daylong post-harvest management and value-added training, focusing on knowledge sharing and practical activities. Core components of the training included group discussions and practical sessions, where farmers practiced essential skills such as proper fish handling, using cooler boxes for maintaining fish quality, and making dried fish, salted fish, and fish balls. These activities provide farmers with the knowledge and techniques needed to enter the fish processing business.

Sub-IR 2.1 Clustered production using BAPs to improve direct marketability of product increased

Context: The Activity farmers often face challenges accessing markets, particularly in rural areas. A lack of transportation, safety concerns, and fluctuating market prices limit the ability of small-scale farmers to sell farmed fish and generate steady income. The Activity intends to address these issues by providing technical support, market linkages, and access to quality fish seed and feed to increase farmers' productivity and income. Market systems are composed of value chains in which many actors such as traders, retailers, suppliers, and processors are involved at different levels in providing services to farmers. However, available essential market information is fragmented. The Activity collects essential market information in selected townships and communicates with the Activity beneficiaries using relevant communication tools and mechanisms including mobile applications. Capacity-building interventions (e.g., training) for private sector actors (traders, processors) and farmers on Better Management Practices (BMP) are being implemented as a part of the program. The Activity promotes a group approach to fish production, input procurement, and product marketing. In addition, the Activity emphasizes BMP standards as a high-quality approach to every step in the production chain to ensure that products are safe, pure, and effective. The BMP standard applies 10 points to farmers' practices for setting up ponds and tracking farmers' practices in terms of pond record books, sanitation, and cleanliness.

Progress: As a result of implementing activities, SSA farmers could produce fresh and safe fish from fishponds with a series of support in multiple aspects of the Activity.

Distribution of Market Actor Lists

To promote market linkage and farmers' accessibility to input suppliers and product buyers, the Activity compiled a list of service providers who can provide the services required for fish farming and then created a booklet directory that includes the name of the supplier, the name of the shop, the address of the supplier, the type of service provider, the available services, and the phone number of the service provider. AYO reported that 7 different categories of booklets were developed for farmers from 7 Activity townships and distributed to 276 SSA farmers selected in Year 3.

The majority of service providers listed in this booklet are located within and near the Activity township and are easily accessible by the SSA farmers. The following service providers are included in the input supplier list:

- Fish feed supplier
- Lime and fertilizer supplier
- Pond excavation service provider
- Fishing Net supplier
- Fish seed supplier

In the product buyer's list,

- A list of fish wholesalers and retailers is included.

The number of service providers included in the market actor booklet is shown in table 13 below.

Table 13 Different types of suppliers, service providers, and buyers

Townships	Feed supplier	Lime and fertilizer supplier	Pond excavation service provider	Fishing net provider	Fish seed supplier	Fish buyer	Total
Myothit	13	5	3	4	21	4	50
Sinbaungwe	9	3	3	4	12	3	34
Taungdwingyi	8	4	4	4	21	6	47
Pwintbyu	11	9	7	2	5	14	48
Seikphyu	11	8	5	11	5	14	54
Aunglan	10	5	3	4	12	3	37
Thayet	9	4	3	4	12	3	35

Source: AYO

Better Management Practices Data Collection

To produce safe fish and fish products by SSA farmers, the Activity developed BMP checklists, and monitored farming practices, and pond preparation to fish marketing, to increase production, encourage more efficient land use and natural resource management, and ensure safe farm-to-plate fish production. According to the Activity, for a pond to be confirmed as a BMP pond, the farmer must adhere to at least three BMP parameters. In BMP checklists, 10 points were designated to measure farmers' adoption of BMP practices, and the Activity verified farmers' practices against the checklists.

Ar Yone Oo collected BMP checklist data from 187 SSA ponds of Y3 ponds from Pwintbyu, Seikphyu, Sinbaungwe, Myothit, and Taungdwingyi respectively.

Table 14 Number of farmers collected BMP survey

Township	No. of farmer groups collected	No. of farmers collected		
		Male	Female	Total
Pwintbyu	8	49	24	73
Seikphyu	2	18	3	21
Myothit	5	29	13	42
Taungdwingyi	2	12	2	14
Sinbaungwe	5	22	15	37
Total	22	130	57	187

Source: AYO

Sub IR 2.2 Reduced post-harvest loss

Context: Field experience shows there is poor observance of food safety practices and a limited understanding of the characteristics of quality fish among supply chain actors; this results in a loss of income because of the early deterioration of fish, and consequently, harm to the health of consumers. The Activity provides training to various actors in the aquaculture fish supply chain to increase knowledge of the importance of observing food safety practices and applying good quality control, as well as fish preservation methods that can help boost income and promote good health and nutrition among consumers. Furthermore, the Activity fosters the expanding potential of the small-scale

aquaculture sector by engaging women in entrepreneurial activities and establishing income opportunities through value-added fish products.

While aquaculture farming remains a male-dominated activity in Myanmar, post-harvest activities such as selling, marketing, and processing are commonly led by women - resulting in increased income and better nutrition of the family (Aregu et. al., 2017). However, there are information gaps that are focused on supporting the improvement of methods and processes of small-scale fish processors, fresh fish and processed fish traders, retailers, and wholesalers, As a result, F4L engages experts that use bottom-up and gender-inclusive approaches to help create applicable business models and innovative technologies that will improve quality of fish products resulting in increased income and good nutrition and health among local consumers.

Progress: Post-harvest management training for SSA farmers

Post-harvest management training is provided to the selected SSA farmers to increase quality fish production and food safety from farm to plate. In this training, proper fish harvesting methods, clean and fresh transportation and storage, and displaying fish products on the market were shared.

Table 15 Post-harvest Training Achievement in Y3 by AYO

Townships	Nos. of sessions	Male	Female	Total participant
Pwintbyu	2	16	12	28
Seikphyu	3	40	26	66
Myothit	4	41	17	58
Taungdwingyi	2	8	3	11
Sinbaungwe	8	53	11	64
Aunglan	3	16	3	19
Thayet	3	27	2	29
Total	25	201	74	275

Source: AYO

Fish Processing Training also was held in Nyaungshwe and Hopong by MFF Southern Shan. The training encompassed various aspects of fish processing techniques, including the preparation of fish paste, drying fish, salting fish, producing fish sauce, and making shrimp paste. Participants were equipped with practical skills and knowledge necessary for these processes, aimed at enhancing their capabilities in fish processing. Through hands-on demonstrations and theoretical explanations, participants gained insight into preserving fish products efficiently, thereby adding value to their fishery activities. This training not only contributed to the diversification of their products but also offered opportunities for income generation and economic sustainability within the communities. Feed Miller Training followed next offered by MFF Southern Shan in Hopong to produce feeds of commendable quality. This achievement is significant not only for ensuring the nutritional needs of livestock but also for promoting the growth and health of fish, ultimately contributing to the overall sustainability of aquaculture operations.

2.2.1.1: Provide capacity building and information on food safety practices and value addition to fish processors, fresh fish, processed fish collectors/traders, and SSA producers.

This year, Fish for Livelihoods Activity team and partners continued to facilitate the adoption of good food safety practices and support in increasing income through value addition activities among Activity participants. Below are activities to date.

- To produce small fish powder for home consumption, the team **distributed multipurpose grinder** among 20 women in Shwebo, 10 women in Sintgaing, and 10 women in Nyaung

Shwe Townships. The women recipients used small indigenous fish species such as flying barb, spotted barb, mola, Indian glassy fish, including small prawns for making fish powder ensuring essential nutrients are included in the diets of young children. In Shwebo, the women reported that at least 3.12 viss of fish powder were produced and added in meals while in Nyaung Shwe, the women indicated that they improvised by producing a mixture of chickpea, ground peanut, chili, and small dry prawns for household consumption.

- **Fish processing training** among fish processors, SSA farmers and Activity staff in Nyaung Shwe and Hopong Townships. WorldFish, BRAC and MFF Southern Shan organized a two-day training session in two batches with a total of 78 participants (F-41, M-37). The training sessions focused on making various fish products such as fish sauce, dried fish, fish paste, salted fish, and shrimp paste. The training helped improve fish processing techniques, enhance product quality, and ensure adherence to good food safety standards among the participants. It will also contribute to reducing waste and loss by utilizing the raw fish that were not sold that day. At the end of the training MFF Southern Shan provided materials such as water containers, bowls, and plastic boxes for storing processed fish. The training contributed to diversifying products and offered opportunities for income generation for the retailers and processors in their communities.
- **Post Harvest Management and Fish value addition training.** For this year, the Activity team and partners provided training to a total 341 farmers (F-110, M-231) in Taunggyi, Myittha, Sintgaing, Pwintbyu, Seikphyu, Myothit, Taungdwinggyi, Sinbaungwe, Aunglan and Thayet Townships. The training focused on proper fish handling, proper use of ice when storing, transporting, and processing fish, and the use of good quality packaging to extend the shelf life of products. Topics on creating value-added products, optimizing business operations and understanding market demand to increase profits were added to equipped participants in pursuing their business.

2.2.1.2: Conduct activities at the local markets (e.g. competition among vendors, provision of fabricated tables cum container) that can enhanced fish quality for local consumers and improved hygiene and sanitation practices among fish vendors in local market with the assistance of partners.

This year, to ensure adoption good fish handling and hygiene practices among fish vendors, Fish for Livelihoods Activity team and implementing partners distributed 27 fish display racks in Myittha (3), Sintgaing (3), Pekon (12), Hopong (6) and Taunggyi (3) Townships. Moreover, in Pekhonn, the Activity team distributed various materials such as cutting board, weighing scales, scissors and knives to 12 market actors. Prior to distribution, the team provided training on the importance of observing good food safety and hygiene practices which result in improved the shelf life of fresh fish and ensures good quality fish are available for local consumers. Based on the report from 49 fish retailers and wholesalers for the 3-month period, profit varies with a few retailers reported having a profit of 50,000 MMK only while one retailer/ wholesaler had a profit as high as 23,818,000 MMK with a total of 12,502 viss sold. This also means that the wholesaler needs to invest more to purchase huge quantity of fresh fish from farmers/traders which can be risky especially when there is poor cold storage facilities in the area.

In Shwebo, 5 fish vendors continued to use the solar powered freezer collectively to extend the freshness of fish and aquatic products for a longer period. To date, a total of 4194 viss of fresh fish, prawn, and processed featherback were stored since the freezer was installed at one of the fish retailer's houses. The fish vendors expressed that the freezer helps in retaining the quality of the fish for the next day and thus can still be sold at a reasonable price. As a group, they contribute 50 MMK per viss as a storage fee for maintaining the equipment.

In addition, to encourage fish vendors to adhere to good fish handling and hygiene practices, BRAC, one of the implementing partners, conducted a competition among fish vendors at the local market

with 4 model fish vendors emerged as winners in Shwebo Township. The event also created awareness on the importance of using ice to preserve the freshness of fish contrary to local perception that fish on ice is of bad quality.

2.2.1.3: Construction of improved smoker to improve product quality and increase income among fish processors in selected F4L areas.

This work was postponed due to conflict in the identified area.

2.2.1.4: Distribution of portable fish driers and solar fish driers to improve food safety practices and increase income among women SSA farmers and fish processors in F4L selected areas.

This year, Activity team distributed one low cost solar fish drier with a solar operated exhaust fan to one interested fish processor at the start of the peak season at Inle lake, Southern Shan. However, due to heavy flooding in the area, the testing was not completed. The testing will resume once it is possible to do. The team developed guidelines on how to use and monitor the performance of the solar fish drier. Once tested and with positive feedback, the construction of solar fish drier will be replicated in other areas.

2.2.1.5 Conduct training on improved hygiene practices and good manufacturing practices among ice plant operators and laborers to improve their capacity on proper handling and distribution of ice.

For this year, the Activity team with the support of a consultant conducted training on good manufacturing practices (GMP) of ice plant facility in Shwe Nyaung, Southern Shan and Shwebo, Sagaing. A total of 25 (F-6, M-19) ice plant operators, laborers and Activity staff participated in the training. The sessions focused on the GMP principles, identification of critical control points, how to implement sanitation procedures and maintaining records for traceability and compliance. Before the two-day training, the consultant and the trainees visited the ice plant facilities to observe the premises and identify compliance issues that can affect the quality of ice. Issues found were rusty ice block mold, use of wood for ice maker, no regular water testing, water source is near the toilet, chemicals near the production area, poor observance of cleanliness and lack of standard operating procedures.

During the training, the trainees discussed possible solutions to the issues found so ice plant owners can comply with the good manufacturing standards. As a next step, in Shwe Nyaung, water samples were submitted to a laboratory in Yangon and were found to have microbial and heavy metals contamination. Currently, the owner is planning to install a new water source with filtration system once her budget allows. Meanwhile for Shwebo, the team is preparing for the water samples to be submitted to the laboratory.

IR 3: Improved Nutrition, Food safety, and WASH

Sub-IR 3.1 Improved adoption of nutrition and wash behaviors

Output 3.1.1: Increased awareness on nutrition, WASH and food safety practices

Context: Previous activity experience indicates that there is limited awareness of the importance of good nutrition and WASH and food safety practices among most households, which can lead to poor nutrition outcomes, especially among young children. The F4L team engages Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) entities, NGOs, the private sector, and communities to gather information on the current nutrition and WASH practices, which includes researching priority groups to help in designing relevant complementary activities and to change behaviors.

Progress:

3.1.1.1: Development and printing of communication materials on nutrition and WASH based on the Essential Nutrition Actions and Essential Health Actions messages; includes the importance of the consumption of micronutrient-rich small fish (SIS), farming SIS, food safety, limited consumption of fish-based products, benefits of using ice on fresh fish and on gender inclusiveness.

For this year, the Activity team distributed various IEC materials on the consuming small indigenous fish species (SIS), and effective WASH practices in the Activity areas, F4L team disseminated key messages on the importance of adherence to good post-harvest and processing practices to ensure adoption of food safety and good hygiene practices among Activity participants. More details are found in the communication materials section as reported by the IEC & Training Coordinator.

3.1.1.2: Dissemination of digitized key nutrition and WASH messages through an online platform and radio channels to Activity and non-Activity participants

The details are found in the communication materials section as reported by IEC & Training Coordinator.

"3.1.1.3: Continue engagement with the established network to increase the extension of key nutrition and WASH messages (e.g. SUN CSA, Nutrition TWG, SAG+)"

WorldFish as a steering committee member of the Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Alliance (SUN CSA) network continues to engage with key stakeholders in the promotion of fish agri-food system in the country. A series of meetings were held this year; quarterly meetings (4), and online general assembly (2), UN Nutrition Interim task force meeting (12) that provided an opportunity to get involved in nutrition and health discussions such as the development of the Food based dietary guidelines ensuring fish and other aquatic foods are included in the discussion.

Sub-IR 3.2 Improved consumption of diverse, safe and nutritious food

Output 3.2.1 (a): Improved knowledge on food safety, vegetable, and mola-carp polyculture production

Output 3.2.1 (b): Improved access to diverse, safe and nutritious food

Context: For this year, the focus is on filling the gap of information of the macronutrient, microbial and heavy metals parameters to determine the quality of fish-based processed products that are developed through engagement with the private sector. Fish-based processed products (e.g., dried small fish powder) are a nutrient-dense food that can fill nutrient needs, especially for vulnerable groups. Analyzing these products provides accurate information to consumers.

In continuation to last year, to increase the availability of nutritious and diverse food in rural households where undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies exist, F4L continues to provide nutrient-rich small fish broodstock for farming and diverse vegetable and fruit seeds for planting in homestead gardens and pond embankments. Since malnutrition is linked to the poor environment and poor hygiene, F4L distributes WASH hardware e.g., latrine, water containers, and soaps to priority groups to facilitate the adoption of effective behaviors resulting in improved nutrition. Furthermore, to spark interest and encourage other households to adopt effective WASH practices and adapt integrated fish agri-food systems, initiatives such as model households and competitions are piloted.

Progress:

3.2.1.1: Provision of seed kits depending on the types of seed identified that are grown in the area for vegetable dyke production among beneficiary households; after the development of vegetable seasonal calendar per area

This year, to support farmers in their vegetable production resulting in diet diversity and increase income, the Activity provided gardening materials such as hoe, watering cans and plastic sheets to 802 farmers (F-191, M-611) in Magway, Kachin, Southern Shan and Eastern Shan. Farmers reported producing vegetables such as onion, pumpkin, cucumber, French bean, long green bean, okra, bottle gourd, tomato, eggplant, papaya, and corn in pond embankments, and backyards (see the table below for details). Eighty nine percent (89%) of the farmers have reported an income with a total value of 31,031,970 MMK.

Table 16 Number of farmers received vegetable production assistance

Organization	Region/State	Female	Male	Total
Ar Yone Oo	Magway	73	203	276
BRAC	Shan (South)	17	29	46
KMSS_Kengtung	Shan (East)	56	250	306
MFF_Southern Shan	Shan (South)	36	56	92
WorldFish	Kachin	4	27	31
	Shan (South)	5	46	51
Total		191	611	802

3.2.1.2: Provision of Small Indigenous Fish species (SIS) broodstock among beneficiary households

For this year, the Activity initiated producing small indigenous fish species in Mandalay region. The detail of this activity is found in the earlier section on small scale aquaculture.

"3.2.1.3: Distribution of WASH package materials (e.g., handwashing stations with soap, toilet bowls, water filter) to increase adoption of improved WASH practices among beneficiary households"

For this year, Fish for Livelihoods continued to raise awareness on the importance of applying effective WASH practices at critical times among Activity participants. In addition, hygiene promotion event was conducted to 251 students in two of the high schools in Nyaungshwe Township. Furthermore, to facilitate adoption of good WASH behaviors for improved health and nutrition, the Activity distributed WASH materials such as handwashing containers, toilet bowls, water buckets, soap and water filters to a total of 813 (F- 262, M-551) farmers and market actors in Pwintbyu, Myittha, Sintgaing, Shwebo, Taunggyi, Nyaungshwe, Pekhon, Hoping, Mansi, Bhamo, Mogaung, Momauk, Myitkyina, and Waingmaw Townships.

To demonstrate the adoption of good WASH practices among Activity participants, the Activity team conducted WASH survey among selected Activity households. Based on the findings, 19 of 21 townships have either soap or detergent and within reach at every household's handwashing station, and 94% of households used soap and water at their handwashing stations. Every household in 19 townships used its toilet, and all the toilets had doors to ensure privacy and to prevent animals from entering the facility. In addition, all the households in 8 of 19 townships surveyed had handwashing stations with soap and water in the toilet facility.

"3.2.1.4: Establishment of integrated Agri/fish-food system model households in 6 geographical areas; model HHs will have large + SIS in ponds, homestead garden, improved latrine, water filter, and tippy tap"

For this year, to demonstrate the benefits of applying integrated fish agri-food systems in the village, MFF Southern established 8 model households in Hopong, Southern Shan. Farmers from nearby villages can visit the demonstration farms and share experiences on the advantages and difficulties of adopting fish agri-food systems approaches.

"3.2.1.5: Competition of best-integrated Agri/fish food system in selected activity areas (large + SIS in ponds, homestead garden in dyke or backyard, improved latrine, water filter, and tippy tap)"

The activity is postponed due to security situation and flooding in most places.

3.2.1.6: Conduct of minimum dietary diversity for Women (MDDW) survey to determine dietary diversity score of women of reproductive age in Activity participating households

c/o Nway

3.2.1.7: Replicate open pollinated vegetable seeds production in selected F4L areas.

The open-pollinated vegetable production activity in Magway was completed with positive feedback from the farmers. The Activity team with the support of the Agronomist conducted training to a total of 38 farmers (F-16, M-22) from 5 villages in Sinbaungwe Township. Once demonstration plots were established, farmers from other villages visited the area to observe and learnt techniques in making organic fertilizers and insecticides. For the next year, the local seeds produced by the demonstration farmers will be distributed to other farmers to test the germination rate and its performance when compared to hybrid seeds.

Meanwhile in Southern Shan where the open pollinated vegetable production started last year, the farmers who received the local seed varieties produced by the farmers indicated that the average germination rates were 79% for okra, 80% for bush-type beans, 90% for yard-long beans, and 85% for Amaranthus. The average survival rates of germinated seedlings were 82% for okra, 84% for bush-type beans, 93% for yard-long beans, and 78% for Amaranthus that will ensure good yield during harvest.

The seed germination performance trials demonstrated the strong potential of okra, bush-type beans, yard-long beans, and Amaranthus for reliable germination, high yields, and favorable market demand. These crops offer valuable opportunities for farmers due to their adaptability, productivity, and profitability since the seed is produced locally. There is good market demand for okra and beans supporting farmers in increasing their income.

An additional benefit observed during the trials was the practice of farmers saving harvested seeds for the next growing season without purchasing from seed companies. This practice not only reduces costs but also helps maintain genetic diversity resulting in long-term agricultural sustainability.

3.2.1.8: Expand home production of dried small fish powder in selected F4L areas.

For this year, 40 women in Shwebo (20), Sintgaing (10) and Nyaungshwe (10) townships continued to produce small fish powder with a total of 17 viss. Caregivers added small fish powder to vegetable dishes and rice meals for young children, increasing daily nutrient intakes. The consumption of animal source food such as fish remains important for children and women of reproductive age especially with the on-going crises in Myanmar. Fish is rich in bioavailable protein and essential nutrients which are needed in addressing nutrient gaps.

Sub-IR 3.3: Improved diet diversity and food safety for young children and women of reproductive age through SBCCs and nutrition education

Output 3.3.1: Improved knowledge and consumption behaviors on fish

Context: F4L addresses one of the underlying causes of malnutrition; poor nutrition knowledge and inadequate child feeding practices by providing knowledge and basic nutrition information especially on the importance of eating fish, and vegetables and having a diverse diet to achieve good nutrition among rural households. In addition, F4L through implementing partners conducts social behavior change communication activities (e.g., role-plays, demonstration, support groups, etc.) focusing on the barriers and the enablers of changing and adoption of good behaviors among priority groups.

Progress:

3.3.1.1: Conduct of refresher training course focusing on nutrition especially on the consumption of fish and Small Indigenous fish and vegetables resulting in dietary diversity, and improved WASH practices to new implementing partner staff.

This year, the Activity team conducted a 5-day training of trainers to the 21 (F-8, M-13) community facilitators from new implementing partners Ar Yone Oo and MFF Sagaing, held in Kengtung, Eastern Shan. The participants learned topics on SSA technology, basic nutrition, effective WASH practices, and open-pollinated vegetable production. The training was a mix of theory and practical sessions to ensure engagement among the participants. Moreover, to increase the understanding of the participants, the WorldFish team organized a pond site visit to a farmer who adopted best management practices. Participants witnessed firsthand the importance of observing best management practices e.g. use of quality feed, monitoring of water quality, among others to increase pond productivity.

3.3.1.2: Social Behavior Change communication activities on nutrition and improved WASH practices such as cooking demonstration, formation of Mothers support group, nutrition month campaigns, etc. at a different venue (markets, health center, etc.) and platforms (e.g. radio channel) (Includes nutrition messages in SBCC strategy promoting consumption of nutrition fish)

For this year, to increase awareness of the importance of good nutrition for all people in the Activity areas, the Activity conducted multiple events in the villages and reached a total of 905 (F- 580, M-325) individuals (Activity and non-Activity participants). Cooking demonstrations and special talks focused on the importance of consuming diverse foods which includes small indigenous fish species to address nutrient needs especially among young children and women of reproductive age (15-49 years old).

To make the activity interactive for participants, competitions, actual demonstrations on proper handwashing and proper icing of fish were added. Tangible prizes such as cooking oil, detergent, and soap were given to participants who joined the competitions to encourage them for the next year's celebration.

8. Activity management and cross-cutting

8.1. Activity management

The effective management of the Activity at the small-scale aquaculture (SSA) level has persisted despite over three years of political unrest in the country. This success is largely due to the active involvement of Aquaculture Promoters (APs) in the intervention states. For example, during a severe storm in September that affected central and eastern regions, timely warnings from APs helped save some SSA farms.

Activity managers oversee implementation, financial management, and decision-making. Team leaders execute activities as planned, assist with scheduled reporting (including financial reports), and collaborate with other team members to gather data from the field through Community Facilitators (CFs). The Administration and Finance team manages the Activity's budget and expenditures in consultation with managers and team leaders. CFs collect necessary data, monitor activities, and deliver SSA Module Training. All collected data is reported to the Data Analyst and Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) teams for entry and analysis, with support from WorldFish to ensure accuracy and reliability. Monthly meetings between staff and APs further enhance management and implementation efforts, allowing the team to report updates and make adjustments for any weather-related delays.

Financial management training provides critical skills for managing budgets and making informed financial decisions, improving operational efficiency and resource use. It also fosters transparency and accountability, building trust among stakeholders and attracting potential investors. When individuals are skilled in financial planning, they are better equipped to navigate economic uncertainties and plan strategically for the future.

Despite the challenging political climate, careful field visits to farms promote effective execution of on-farm activities. The safety of Activity staff is prioritized by avoiding high-risk areas and focusing on lower-risk villages, postponing visits when security conditions are not favorable. Field staff and APs are positioned in strategic locations to monitor fishponds, sample fish, and address farmers' concerns. Regular team meetings allow for the review and adjustment of the monthly implementation plan (DIP) to suit local conditions. If in-person meetings with APs are not possible due to security risks, they are invited to hold meetings at field offices when conditions allow.

In enhancing market connections and business collaborations, facilitating access to fish seed, forming partnerships with feed manufacturers for high-quality fish feed, and connecting fish vendors to markets can significantly improve the supply chain. This approach is expected to expand market opportunities and increase income at the community level in the coming years.

Considering gender dynamics is essential for ensuring equitable access to Activity benefits. Socio-economic factors like market linkages, pricing mechanisms, and capacity building from farm to market are crucial for sustainable development. Strategies to build climate resilience must also be integrated, as aquatic ecosystems are vulnerable to climate change. Addressing these crosscutting issues will enhance the sustainability of fishers' livelihoods in Burma.

The gender equality approach employs gender-sensitive language, ensures equal access to services, and involves both women and men in decision-making processes. The Activity builds on previous successful experiences and adjusts based on effective communication and coordination, learning lessons to boost impact and reduce costs.

In Year 3, a series of Lessons Learned Workshops were successfully conducted across six states/regions (Kachin, Magwe, Mandalay, Sagaing, Shan Eastern, and Shan Northern) to share insights from the implementation of the Activity among partners. Key themes and issues were discussed to encourage continued improvement.

The constructive major themes and issues mentioned below were discussed.

- Importance of outcome/success stories collection and reporting
- Key lessons learned by 8 IPs
- Key lessons learned by 5 WorldFish Leads
- Intermediate results and cross-cutting themes
- Transition of the BRAC team
- The extension of MFF teams

With follow-up activities to be carried out in Year 4 such as

- Qualitative approach for the implementation of the intervention activities in the forthcoming year, Y4
- Work planning and reporting problems faced by IPs should be closely consulted with FCs and
- Provision of Tablets to IPs in replacement of Android devices that are not applicable to use in remote areas in the Activity intervention areas where the Internet service is weak and unstable.

The workshop organized and held by the Activity implementation partner at the intervention state/region is more effective in inviting many resident participants for convenient transportation, and uncostly expenses that lead to a better exchange of lessons learned during the implementation and operations of the Activity. Bi-lingual and quadrilingual workshops were in progress in favor of native interpreters encouraging ethnic communities to participate in discussions and presentations.

8.2. Grants and finance

The Feed the Future Fish for Livelihoods Activity (FF-F4L) grant agreement, numbered 72048221IO00001, commenced on September 15, 2021, and is extended until September 14, 2027. The total grant allocation amounts to USD 17,000,000, with USD 3,400,000 obligated for the current reporting year.

For the fiscal year 202310-202409, the Activity demonstrates a commendable implementation rate of 93%, with actual expenditures reaching USD 3,150,776 against the approved budget of USD 3,400,000. This outcome signifies effective resource utilization; however, the underspending primarily arises from the Supplies and Contractual/Sub-grants budget lines. Adjustments must be made for the forthcoming fiscal year to address these discrepancies. Continuous monitoring of individual budget lines is essential to optimize future allocations and sustain Activity momentum.

Value for Money (VfM) Assessment

During the reporting period, the FF-F4L prioritized VfM principles, ensuring the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy use of resources to maximize impact. The team has actively managed input costs associated with procurement, recruitment, and subcontracting, incorporating lessons learned from other WorldFish interventions that focus on circular economy practices and nature-based solutions. This integration has substantially enhanced VfM across all intervention activities.

Efficiency

With an implementation rate of 93%, actual expenditures of USD 3,150,776 reflect effective fund utilization against an approved budget of USD 3,400,000. Nevertheless, the underspending observed in supplies and contractual/sub-grants highlights the need for improved resource allocation and planning.

Effectiveness

The program has exceeded several key performance targets, including:

- Food Security Programs (EG.3-2): Reached 9,477 individuals against a target of 6,000.
- Agricultural Yield (EG.3-10, -11, -12): Achieved an average yield of 1,870 kg/ha, closely aligning with the revised baseline goal.
- Commercial Aquaculture Shift (Custom 1.1): Successfully transitioned 5,101 farmers to commercial aquaculture, surpassing the target of 1,800.
- Improved Practices (EG.3.2-24): Exceeded targets in the number of individuals applying improved practices, demonstrating effective training and implementation

Economic Impact

The program has yielded significant economic benefits, including:

- Sales Growth (EG.3.2-26): USD 1 million in annual sales generated by producers and firms receiving assistance, underscoring robust economic returns.
- Indirect Benefits (Custom 1.6): Depending on how indirect beneficiaries are quantified the Activity has reached between 13,503 and over 800,000 indirect beneficiaries, reflecting a broader economic impact beyond direct participants.

Gender Inclusion

The Activity achieved a notable 34% female participation (GNDR 2) in economic resource programs, exceeding its target. This accomplishment not only enhances community empowerment but also contributes to overall social value.

Social Impact

Improvements in access to sanitation services and increased dietary diversity (HL.82-5) among participants have led to enhanced public health outcomes, aligning with VfM principles.

Collaboration and Strategic Resource Management

Collaboration with local organizations has proven beneficial. For instance, insights gained from the practice of Black Soldier Fly (BSF) farming underscore the effective use of grant funds in producing protein-rich larvae from organic waste. Ongoing analyses with Spectrum focus on the cost-efficiency of BSF production, emphasizing potential economies of scale.

The Activity has maintained operational efficiency amid the challenges posed by the 'Four-C' crises (Conscription, Climate Change, COVID-19, and Coup) by leveraging virtual platforms for activities. This approach has not only reduced costs but also expanded reach to more target areas.

Field assessments in pilot areas (Jul-Sep'24) have enriched the understanding of local fish supply chains and market dynamics, aligning with VfM principles. Collaboration with NGOs, such as Myaw Lint Yar (HOPE), has facilitated the integration of rehabilitated individuals into the workforce, maximizing the impact of grant funds and bolstering local economic resilience. A significant achievement has been the extensive training provided by WorldFish for both the community and the team members of HOPE on innovative aquaculture practices and best management techniques, thereby enhancing livelihoods through fish farming.

The pilot test in PutaO has been particularly successful, leading to the establishment of a temporary hatchery that is anticipated to significantly increase household income for fish farmers by improving access to essential fish species and fingerlings. WorldFish is committed to ensuring efficient coordination between the two interventions to avoid overlap while focusing on targeted support for fish farmers in the newly invented areas in PutaO.

The strategic allocation of grant funds to high-need and hard-to-reach areas exemplifies our commitment to VfM by directing resources where they can yield the most significant impact, ultimately enhancing the overall return on investment.

In summary, the Activity demonstrates strong value for money through effective resource utilization, the attainment of key performance targets, and the delivery of significant economic and social benefits. Ongoing monitoring and adjustments in budget lines are recommended to address underspending and optimize resource allocation for future fiscal years. Overall, the Activity

represents a successful investment of donor funds into sustainable livelihoods within the fisheries sector in Burma.

8.3. Monitoring evaluation and learning

Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) is an integral part of F4L Activity implementation. MEL plays a crucial component in ensuring that F4L adheres to a high standard of monitoring, evaluation, and learning and collects data of high quality. It also guarantees that data is presented in a manner that provides management with insightful and robust evidence to make informed decisions. The subsequent paragraphs will cover the contributions made by the MEL and Data team to F4L.

Data Tools Package (DTP): The WorldFish F4L MEL and the data team supervise and manage the data system for the Activity, which includes various data collection templates and databases. The MEL team yearly refines and updates the DTP, including various templates and tools, based on feedback from field teams and F4L partners, as well as learning from implementation. The Data Tools Package consists of the following templates: 1) Activity participant database, 2) Market actor database, 3) Hatchery database, 4) Nursery database, 5) Feed mill database, 6) Production database, 7) Distribution database, 8) Fish display rack farmer database, and 9) Revolving fund database.

Refresher session for Data tool package (DTP): On January 9, 2024, the data management specialist and monitoring and evaluation coordinators provided a refresher session for data tool package to the field team and sub-grantees. This session mainly focused on newly joined staff, with presentations on how to collect record books and use the new database templates, which include Activity participant database, reporting mechanism, nursery record, hatchery record, farmer record, feed maker record, distribution record, revolving fund record, and market actor record. Moreover, the team explained the data collection of surveys using Kobo Toolbox. The surveys include 1) Better Management Practices (BMP) survey, 2) Monthly market price survey, and 3) Natural and man-made disasters affecting fishponds. The team provided clarity by summarizing the main session ideas, answered various questions, agreed on action items, and due dates for the reporting mechanism. The participants understood and followed the guidelines to submit all types of datasets to the M&E team for timely quarterly and annual reporting.

Physical Monitoring Visit by the MEL Team: In October 2023, the WorldFish “Fish for Livelihoods” (F4L) Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Team carried out a physical monitoring visit to observe and assess the services being provided to SSA farmers in Nyaungshwe, Pekon and Pinlaung Townships, Southern Shan. The farmers are actively engaged in fish farming and managing ponds by monitoring, using blue nets for protection against snakes and birds, and dealing with flooding. They are interested in training for feed formulation and linkage with feed makers for accessing pellet feed. Fishers from He Long (North) village in Nyaungshwe distributed their 4th cycle revolving fund when the team visited, and they are still following the guidelines and rules. Among 15 people, there are 3 or 4 processors for salted Tilapia fishes. The Activity capital is 4,875,000 MMK and now increase to 7,598,700 MMK, that is excluded 30% of interest income in each cycle.

In February 2024, the two M&E coordinators conducted in-person monitoring field trip to the grow-out, nursery and feed mill farmers in total of 11 farmers (female -9, male - 2) in Sintgaing, Mandalay. According to discussion with farmers in the area, they are not in favor of engaging in group activities like collective selling and processing. Water quality is typically high as farmers utilize fertilizers and cow dung. Farmers in the area prefer fresh fish, especially common carp species, giving them rice bran and occasionally peanut cake for feeding. Fish consumption is not wide in Sintgaing township; hence the team have to encourage farmers to eat more fish and discuss with partners in the selection of species for stocking that farmers preferred.

A field monitoring visit provides an important opportunity for the M&E team to meet farmers in the field. The major observations from the field visit are that farmers are satisfied with the Activity’s assistance and are willing to work with the local field teams and partners to gain more aquaculture

knowledge. The Activity also distributed vegetable seeds to farmers for production on pond dykes as part of the integrated farming promotion. This will ensure that households in the intervention areas have access to nutritious food for personal consumption. As a result of the field trip, the team prepared and submitted a report to management and sub-grantee with a set of recommendations to be followed in the future. Overall, it was a successful trip where MEL and the data team contributed prudently.



Figure 1 Meeting with SSA farmers at Kan Kaung Lel Pyin village, Nyaungshwe



Figure 2 Monitoring to revolving fund at Nyaungshwe

Lesson Learned Workshop in Taunggyi (Southern Shan) and Mandalay Township: F4L, MEL and the data team participated in the Lessons Learned Workshop (LLW) at Taunggyi in May 2024 and at Mandalay in June 2024. In LWW, MEL and Data team delivered sessions on a range of topics related to data and MEL. These sessions resulted in a better understanding of data for participants and sub-grantees got an opportunity to interact with WorldFish colleagues to clarify their concerns regarding data and reporting.

Annual Performance Surveys: The monitoring and evaluation team carried out four internal surveys each year. The data gathered from these surveys are reported on key USAID indicators and WorldFish also publishes results in a comprehensive report. These surveys play a crucial role in evaluating the performance of participants (SSA farmers and their family members) and providing evidence to the program team to make necessary adjustments and decisions for future years of implementation.

For the Production survey, most of the Farmer Record Books (FRBs) were collected and their data was transferred to a database template. The second survey is to verify farmers who claim adopting Better Management Practices (BMPs) and collected the survey from Grow-out (1041), hatchery (9), nursery (58), feed miller (21) and fish retailer (6) farmers. Almost 99% of the farmers applied the basic BMP practices. The third survey is dietary diversity or what we call MDDW. The team conducted a minimum diet diversity for women survey among 828 women aged 15-49 years old in the Activity areas. Based on the results, 81 percent achieved the minimum score of 5 of 10 food groups, which is higher than the previous year by 55 percent. The fourth survey is the verification of WASH material provided to farmers and their families. The surveyors carried out physical checks on the handwashing facilities for the 355 farmers sampled and resulted that 90 percent of them have both water and soap available.

Survey to ascertain the relationship between improved income and adoption of BMPs:

The MEL and data team, with the help of an Impact Assessment colleague from WorldFish Headquarters, designed and developed a survey to assess whether the adoption of BMPs is linked to better income and production for fish farmers. For this survey, detailed Terms of Reference (ToR) were developed and advertised to hire services of a local consulting firm based in Myanmar. The firm helped in the data collection from the field in all townships. After a rigorous selection process,

WorldFish Myanmar hired a local consulting firm to collect data in around 700 sample farmers in the townships where we work. The results of this survey will be included in the annex of the annual report to be submitted to USAID.

Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) and Data Management Workshop:

The M&E and data team under the Feed the Future Burma Fish for Livelihoods Activity organized a two-day "MEL and Data Management Workshop" in Yangon from February 15-16, 2024. In total, 43 participants (22 males and 21 females) attended the event, representing WorldFish and staff members of sub-grantees. The workshop aimed to discuss MEL mechanisms between WorldFish and partners, data management (farmer book recording, analysis, and reporting) using formatted templates, and how to improve performance in FY 2024 and beyond through data exchange. Participants provided feedback and recommendations on enhancing MEL data and reporting mechanisms. Decisions were made to enhance data quality for reporting to USAID in the future. Field-based feedback will help strengthen the data system between WorldFish and partners under challenging circumstances. The M&E and data team are continuously supporting partners to provide high-quality data as per the reporting schedule.



Lessons Learned Workshop in Yangon: F4L M&E and the data team carried out a successful Lessons Learned Workshop in Yangon for FY 2024, with WorldFish colleagues and F4L partners for two days (23-24 July 2024). A total of 49 participants (Male=21, and Female=28) took part in the workshop. The main objective is to gain a deeper insight into what was successful, what was not successful, and how to make improvements for future Activity implementation. During the workshop, sharing the experience of each sub-guarantee helped them identify areas that require improvement and support for SSA farmers. Feedback from the workshop will guide F4L in facilitating and enhancing behavioral changes in food safety and BMP practices during production, improving nutrition and income for farmers in SSA, providing technical support for gender sessions, updating training extension materials, and potentially collaborating with new market players.



Fish for Livelihoods (F4L) Planning Meeting for FY 2024: F4L organized a two-day (20-21 August 2024) face-to-face planning meeting in Yangon, Myanmar. The participants discussed about previous accomplishments of F4L and prepared workplan for the upcoming fiscal year, 2025. The meeting was attended by 66 participants (Male= 27, Female=39). WorldFish team members had a discussion with partners about the progress of F4L Activity Intermediate Results (IRs) I, II, and III. Moreover, cross-cutting themes including Gender, market systems, climate change, financial management and Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) were thoroughly explored in discussions with partners. The USAID, WorldFish, and partners had a good chance to interact and exchange important insights gained throughout Activity implementation at the planning meeting. The exchange of information and lessons learned among participants validated what worked well, what didn't and what needs improvement. It helps WorldFish and its partners in establishing an effective strategy that will be sustained during future years of implementing activities. USAID and WorldFish representatives provided suggestions and reviewed the partners' work plans to ensure that F4L activity delivers reliable and high-quality assistance to small-scale aquaculture (SSA) farmers, their families, and the fish value chain market actors in Myanmar.



8.4. Gender, youth and Women Empowerment

In Year 3, F4L Activity was implemented with a strong gender focus, the gender equality and inclusion, particularly women and youth empowerment approaches, has been at the center of the all-Activity cycles from the beginning to the year end. Also promoting internal staff capacity strengthening within a WorldFish organization is essential for enhancing their understanding of Gender Equality & Inclusion when striving for Gender Transformative outcomes throughout all Activity cycles.

Despite facing many difficulties, WorldFish and partners were able to fulfill gender integrated activities and interventions on the ground as commitment. Then WorldFish supported the implementing partners technically to the best of their ability and build their capacity on Gender Equality & Inclusion to help them understand how Gender Equality & Inclusion is essential for achieving greater and more sustainable development outcomes.

The detailed gender integrated activities and outcome/results are as follows:

Reached, Accessed Resources and Benefits, Empowerment and Transformation

WorldFish Myanmar direct implementation in year 3, conducted the WorldFish internal staff capacity building training on Gender Equality and Inclusion, awareness session on the ground, International Women's Day on March at organizational level, international youth day in August.

International Women's Day is celebrated the world over, every year on March 8th. It celebrates womanhood and pays tribute to the indomitable spirit of women across the globe. Its root lies in the early 1900s when oppression and inequality was spurring women to become more vocal and active in campaigning for change. In response to the global actions, WorldFish Myanmar successfully celebrated International Women's Day on March 8th as a half-day event from 1 PM to 3 PM at the International Rice Research (IRRI) office with 16 participants) of Feed the Future Burma Fish for Livelihood including implementing partner's staff joined in it in person. It was carried out in line with the United Nations' 2024 IWD Theme, "Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress." Total 16 Participants (male 5 + female 11) of Feed the Future Burma Fish for Livelihood including implementing partner's staff joined in it in person. Unfortunately, as the event was conducted in person at the IRRI YGN office, staff members who are not based in YGN such as staff from Mandalay, rest field coordinators and IP's staff were only got a chance to participate virtually. All participants celebrated it by wearing the purple colour shirt as purple color is used throughout modern history to represent the fight for gender equality and International Women's Day on March 8.

The half day event covered about the explanation on history of international women day, IWD 2024 theme and it's key messages, current Myanmar gender issues and research findings and it ended with brainstorming group work on Women Empowerment, All Inclusion and Gender Equality" and creating a slogan for each subject.



Results of IWD event: The participants had the chance to realize about how International Women's Day had first emerged and celebrated around the world globally as well as the participant got more in-depth knowledge on what Women Empowerment, Gender Equality and all inclusion are.

The last session of the event also helped the participants to gain the knowledge on the importance of women rights, economic empowerment, gender equality and inclusion and also had a chance to reflect how and where WorldFish Myanmar gender mainstreaming actions stand to achieve gender transformative outcomes.

Internal Staff Capacity Building on Gender Equality & Inclusion

A thorough grasp of Gender Equality & Inclusion by key staff in an organization can enable them to ensure equal opportunities for career advancement, fair pay, and equal representation in leadership positions for all. It can also contribute to establishing an environment where employees feel safe and respected, free from harassment and discrimination.

To initiate a structural change process towards better gender equality in an organization, awareness of gender inequality and knowledge about gender issues in management, but also in the workforce, is of central importance.

All staff, leaders and decision-makers have a role to play in identifying practices, cultures and unconscious gender biases that disadvantage women, and in implementing more inclusive approaches. Thus, Capacity Enhancement Training for the Internal Staff on Gender Equality and Inclusion was conducted by Gender Specialist from WorldFish Myanmar for two days on May 6th and 7th 2024 at Summit Park View Hotel, Yangon, Myanmar. Total 15 (Male- 3 and Female - 12) participants joined in it and 4 out of 15 were WorldFish Implementing Partners' staff who never received the gender training before by the Feed the Future Burma Fish for Livelihood Activity.

Gender Training covers conceptual and practical understanding on how gender mainstreaming matters in all sectors, and how Negative Social Gender Norms, Stereotypes, Discrimination can negatively affect the society and create the types of Gender Based Violence (GBV) cases and it's negative consequences.

Additionally, the two days training aims for the key internal staff to examine their own behaviors and views and to identify how institutional processes may cause disadvantage to women in areas such as decision-making, careers and leadership and how unconscious or implicit bias unintentionally influences judgements and opinions about others based on stereotypes and can result in discrimination.

Training Components and Activities: Over the course of the Training, the group work exercise and brainstorming sessions were included in addition to the presentation by the Gender Specialist. The first training day covered details explanation on Patriarchy System and Feminism Background, Brief of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the introduction of National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (NSPAW) Myanmar (2013-2022). Moreover, Gender Socialization, Internalization, Negative Social Gender Norms, Stereotypes, SOGIES- (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity + Gender Expression) were explained till the afternoon of the day.

The last session of the day was continued after Tea Break by explaining about how difference between Gender Equality & Equity, how Division of Labour and Power Dynamic matter. Besides, the trainees were introduced about Basic Concepts of Gender Based Violences (GBV), and how to prevent from GBV, Case Flow and Case Management as well as Psychosocial Management were also informed in detail.



Training Outcomes: The participants got a basic understanding on Gender Equality & Inclusion since the first day of the training. The participants said they got well awareness on difference between of Gender Equality & Equity including about Intersectionality and inclusion and they also became aware of Gender Norms, Socialization, Internalization and Gender Stereotypes. The participants said the training was so helpful to them as they got chances to know about Gender Based Violence (GBV) and it's negative consequences too.

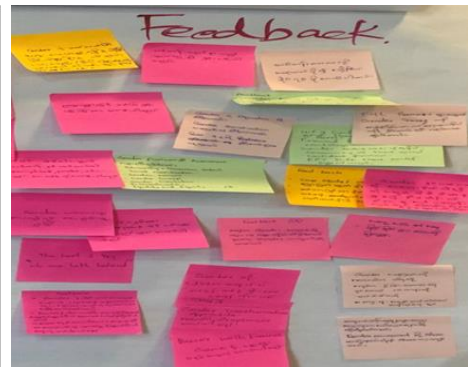
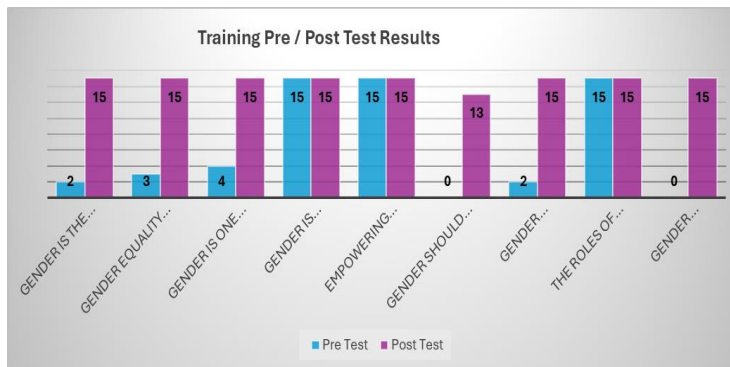


Figure 3 Training Pre/ Post Test Results

Trainee's Feedback:

- ◆ The training is so comprehensive even for the ones who have never joined Gender Training before.
- ◆ The training helps me to understand well about of what Gender and Gender Stereotypes, Gender Socializations and how difference between Gender Equality and Equity.
- ◆ I am now confident enough as I realized well about Gender.
- ◆ I now understood well about Gender and Gender Based Violence (GBV).
- ◆ The most interesting part of the Training for me is knowing about Patriarchy System, Feminism, SOGIES (Gender Identity + Expression) and differences between Gender Equality and Equity as well getting chances better understating about Intersectionality.
- ◆ The training is so good and effective since it included the practical group work exercises.

International Youth Day (IYD) Celebration on August 12th, 2024 : In response to the 2024 International Youth Day's theme of "From Clicks to Progress: Youth Digital Pathways for Sustainable Development", on August 12th 2024, Feed the Future Burma Fish For Livelihood (F4L), USAID-funded activity, commemorated the IYD as a full-day event with 20 young people age between 15 to 24 years in at UCT Tunggyi Hotel, Southern Shan State on August. Youths were invited from three townships such as Nyaung Shwe, Hopong and Taunggyi.

Full Day training sessions covered "Introduction of SDG Goals, Leadership, Gender Equality & Inclusion and Gender Base Violence (GBV) and Psychosocial Frist Aid Concepts and the last session was "Role of IECT and How it is key in this age".

The main goal of the IYD celebration was to improve the knowledge and skills of young people. It is strongly believed that the knowledge these young people will get from the topics listed above will enable them in a way to become good, feminist leaders who can adapt to the sophisticated technological age.

On August 13th, half day gender awareness session was conducted by integrating with Nutrition Campaign event. The session took for 3 hours from 9Am to 12 noon. The awareness session was a short presentation about Gender Equality and Inclusion and how roles and responsibilities must be shared equally in the households and how negative Gender Norms must be changed into positive and continued with the discussion on how the men's opinion on Women Leadership, division of Labors and how men can support the women's role and leadership skills as well as women also need to capacitate themselves with high self-confidence as they are also human beings as the men.

Key Outcomes: Youths said the event is the first time for them by WorldFish's Feed the Future Burma Fish for Livelihood and it made them to know there is International Youth Day (IYD) which has celebrated around the world, and they felt so proud of participating in such a great event. The youths said, they gained knowledge a lot from the IYD event and started to know what International Youth Day Background and SDGs goals are as well as about Leadership styles and Gender Equality & Inclusion, Gender Based Violence (GBV), Psychosocial and importance of Self-Care, etc.



Gender Awareness Half Day Session: During the workshop, a few farmers expressed their desire for gender-specific awareness activities, saying that particularly for the youth, it would be beneficial for their community. If feasible, they would like to receive such activities.

Furthermore, Gender short dialogue sessions were also integrated in the Activity Lesson Learned Workshop in Taunggyi and Mandalay. Feed the Future Burma Fish for Livelihood Activity held workshops on lessons learned in Taunggyi from 13 to 17 May with implementing partners such as BRAC team, KMSS and from 24th to 28th June 2024 in Mandalay with implementing partners BRAC Myanmar, MFF Kachin.

Each Gender Session in Lesson Learned Workshop took 45 minutes at the beginning of the Day 2 and it was great to discuss about Gender Equality and the session included the short presentation about Gender Equality and Inclusion and how it is important and continued with the discussion on how the men's opinion on Women Leadership, division of Labors and how men can support the women's role and leadership skills as well as women also need to capacitate themselves with high self-confidence as they are also human beings as the men.

Specific Outcomes: Become understood that the men need to support women more to increase their confidence level and capacities. The men realized that they need to share the roles and responsibilities of women so that women can represent in public places more than before and the women can gain their capacities in a way from public than private life.



Implementation of Partner Organizations in Year 3

By the supports of WorldFish Myanmar, the following implementing partners are also striving to achieve their implementation with gender equality and inclusion concepts at all Activity cycles. Details are as follows.

Ar Yone Oo Social Development Association

Ar Yone Oo is making persistent efforts to encourage more women to participate in the Activity of F4L, enhance their knowledge and skills, and increase their influence to allow them to take an active role in decision-making processes within their families and communities. Ar Yone Oo has done its best to support gender equity through gender dialogues at community meetings, trainings and workshops that encourage men to embrace their responsibility to advance gender equality, prevent GBV, and address gender norms regarding power imbalances. These dialogues have been useful in encouraging women to enter the sector by providing resources, training, and coaching related to pond security, as well as technical knowledge, record book filling tips, and business skills development. As a result of boosting women participation in Activity activity, women participation in respective activities are seen as 33.3% in community orientation workshop, 30% in post-harvest management training, 36.9% in modules refresher training, 26.6% in aquaculture module 1 training, 27.4% in module 2 training, 26.8% in module 3 training, 26.8% in farmer record book training, 21.9% in PCA workshop, 20.8% in farmer exchange visit, 62.8% in cooking competition and nutrition month event and 27% fund management training. Besides, 29.8% of Activity beneficiaries are women who were provided monetary subsidy and among grow-out farmers, 26.4 of are women who received fish seeds, fish feed, vegetable production assistance and handwashing containers.

BRAC Myanmar

Although most of the growers selected were men, BRAC Myanmar has aimed to ensure that female growers are included in the Activity. In this Year-5, 367 farmers selected and 170 women (46%) of female participants are included in Activity areas Sintgaing, Myittha and Taunggyi. The Activity also placed a strong emphasis on gender and age considerations when selecting Activity participants 2332 (Male-1425, Female-907) growers.63.7% of farmers are female participants of BRAC Myanmar Feed the Future Burma, Fish for Livelihoods Activity. In BRAC Myanmar's experience, it has been important to ensure that selection of men, who are often heads of the household, are included in the discussion to promote women's participation. With support from APs, BRAC Myanmar is collecting

necessary disaggregated data among different age groups of participants to provide additional information relating to youth. BRAC Myanmar is also supporting the fish farmers' family members, especially the women counterparts about the kitchen gardening/ vegetable cultivation and nutrition through this Activity. Also, the Activity has brought women in leadership positions especially second top layers are 100% women staff.

KMSS Kengtung

The training participants are supposed to be the key person in charge of managing the Household's aquaculture resources. However, the team followed WorldFish's directions and included non-Activity participants or beneficiaries in all training sessions. Additional learning sessions were provided throughout the Activity to increase youth and female engagement in fish farming operations. Year 3 Fish for Livelihoods trainings and activities involved aquaculture farmers, housewives, ethnic groups, and communities. In Year 3, the KMSS-Keng Tung team conducted training and seminars for 149 targeted farmers. Of the 846 participants, 378 were youth (aged 16 to 35), including 258 young men and 120 young women.

KMSS Pekhoh

KMSS-Pekhoh is committed to complying with the PSEA/ KMSS' Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics and gender equality in all Activity stages and activities implementation. - The participation of women is ensured in F4L activities. Women participated in the process of the intervention activities such as pond cleaning, embarkment/earth digging, pond renovation, fish feeding, carried fish feed to the ponds, cooking/preparing food for participants, fish stocking, harvesting, planting vegetable on their pond, selling) in the development and maintenance of both individual pond and community pond. Staffs often include on gender topics when conducting training. For fisherfolk, accouple goes fishing in an inn, using a fishing net to catch fish. They clean the debris off the fishing net and later sell the fish caught together. While the woman is fishing, the man is preparing rice and taking care of the children at home. Women involvement is 100% in market actors support activities and women (100% are girls) are active participation in basic micro finance concept sharing. In addition, women are more active in discussion and advising to their members, it is seen that not only women but also men are given equal decision-making rights in the accounting meeting and selling fish.

MFF Kachin

According to year 3 Activity participant database, there are totally 112 members inclusive of 43 female participants. Hence it is clear that we need to balance the gender and youth participation in the sectors of aquaculture. Therefore, we also appointed female aquaculture promoters who would be able to interact with farmers and residents in the community. Moreover, especially male is all leading in fish feed production section during three years of project implementing period. Hence, our team selected one female feed miller for year 3 intending to promote not just women participation but to get involved in leading role, raising their aquaculture skills and able to get stable income and job. We also hoping the result reflects to other women and young people around in our community by the effort of the team and senior partners.

MFF Sagaing

Gender integration remained a priority, with comprehensive efforts to address key gender topics such as sex and gender, gender stereotypes, gender socialization and internalization, gender equality and equity, gender roles, and women's participation and leadership in society. MFF Sagaing delivered

training on these topics to two groups: (10) males and (8) females at MFF-Sagaing's Office in Shwebo Township on September 2, 2024, and (12) males and (6) females at Hanna Orphanage in Homalin Township on September 11, 2024. During these sessions, participants engaged in discussions about shared responsibilities between men and women in both household chores and fish farming, including tasks such as fish feeding and vegetable farming. MFF attained as achievements such as increased female participation in aquaculture training sessions, with 40% female attendance. Encouraged women to take on leadership roles within grower groups. Promoted youth engagement in fish farming and nutrition awareness activities. Fostered equal involvement of both men and women in fish farming and household responsibilities, highlighting shared roles in fish processing and farm management.

MFF Southern Shan

Gender equality is a critical issue in today's society, and at MFF Southern Shan, we are committed to making it a central focus in our work with fish farmers. During every course and lecture, we prioritize discussions on gender equality, sharing valuable knowledge, real-life experiences, and practical examples to raise awareness and foster inclusivity. In Year 3, we organized 12 training sessions and workshops, engaging over 400 participants. These events provided deep insights into gender-related experiences and underscored the importance of gender equality in the aquaculture sector. We remain dedicated to empowering our community and advancing equality in all areas of our work. Gender training marks a major step forward for the fisherfolk in the region, providing them with a valuable opportunity to deepen their understanding of gender dynamics. Through the program, participants gained crucial insights into gender-based violence (GBV) and learned practical ways to address it. They were introduced to the distinction between sex and gender and became aware of the diverse gender groups, including men, women, boys, girls, and gender minorities, such as the LGBT community. The training emphasized the importance of redefining gender roles and responsibilities, addressing resource access and control, promoting active participation in decision-making, and challenging societal norms. Additionally, participants were educated on the four types of violence—physical, emotional, sexual, and violence stemming from harmful traditional practices—equipping them with the knowledge needed to advocate for gender equality and create safer communities. From the beginning, the Activity team has prioritized gender equality and inclusivity throughout all stages of the Activity, with a special focus on involving youth and individuals of all genders.

8.5. Environment/climate change

Feed the Future Burma Fish for Livelihood Activity prioritizes environmental and climate change compliance to ensure its resilience and sustainability. To environmental standards, the Activity implements eco-friendly aquaculture practices, minimizing the use of harmful chemicals and promoting biodiversity conservation. Climate change considerations should be integrated into Activity planning, incorporating adaptive measures to address potential impacts such as changes in water temperature and extreme weather events. The selection of fish species resilient to climate variations is crucial. Furthermore, community awareness programs should educate fisher folk about climate-smart practices and environmental stewardship. Regular monitoring and evaluation mechanisms must be in place. By aligning with environmental and climate change compliance, the Fish for Livelihood Activity can not only mitigate adverse impacts but also contribute positively to the long-term health of aquatic ecosystems in Burma.

The Environmental Mitigation and Management Plan (EMMP) survey was collected from 370 grow out farmers and 59 hatchery and nursery farmers. Regarding the farm pond site selection, farm pond design and farm pond operation and management, grow out farmers least apply farm pond design as the Activity encourages the existing ponds for fish farming. So does in hatchery and nursery farmers, the hatchery and nursery design got the lowest marks for applying environmental mitigation and management plan (EMMP). Post harvest handling got the second lowest marks, and both grow out farmers and hatchery and nursery farmers can do operation and management well compared to other criteria.

In the reporting period FY 2024, approximately 32% (612 out of 1907) of SSA farmers who received fingerling assistance in FY 2024 experienced fish loss due to flooding throughout the entire year and the total estimated fish loss was over 650,000. Mostly 548 farmers were affected by flood in September and there includes 3 nursery ponds from Sinbaungwe, Sintgaing and Aunglan. Among them, around 400 farmers faced a complete loss of fish totaling nearly 530,000 by flood and while 10 farmers faced fish loss from both flood and theft.

Table 17 Total estimated fish loss by month in FY 2024

Year/ Month	Flood	Landslide	Theft	Grand Total
2023/10	5,100			5,100
2023/11	200			200
2023/12			1,300	1,300
2024/02			500	500
2024/06	6,400			6,400
2024/07	51,829			51,829
2024/08	4,409			4,409
2024/09	582,573	1,536		584,109
Grand Total	650,510	1,536	1,800	653,846

Table 18 Number of farmers affected by townships

Region/State	Township	2023/10	2023/11	2023/12	2024/02	2024/06	2024/07	2024/08	2024/09		Grand Total
		Flood	Flood	Theft	Theft	Flood	Flood	Flood	Flood	Landslide	
Kachin	Bhamo						12				12
	Myitkyina						1				1
	Waingmaw						39				39
Magway	Aunglan						1	1			2
	Myothit								44		44
	Ngape		1								1
	Pwintbyu			1					16		16
	Seikphyu	2									2
	Sinbaungwe						2				2
	Taungdwingyi							1	11		12
Mandalay	Myittha								80		80
	Sintgaing						1		35		36
Shan (East)	Kengtung							2	19	11	32
	Monghpyak								8		8
	Mongyawng								21		21
Shan (South)	Hopong								39		39
	Hsihseng							1	45		46
	Nyaungshwe				2				90		90
	Pekon					2			56		56
	Taunggyi							5	73		73
Grand Total		2	1	1	2	2	56	10	537	11	612

Climate change has had a particularly strong impact on Myanmar's Mongyawng Township, Monghpyak Township, and Kengtung Township, where the temperature in 2024 has been higher than in previous years. These townships have seen greater temperatures than usual, resulting in stocking delays and possibly pond drying up. This has created widespread anxiety among local populations, particularly those who rely on fishing and agriculture for a living. Temperature rises have also had an impact on many species' natural habitats, disturbing the ecosystem's delicate equilibrium. In September 2024, heavy rain occurred around the townships, which caused flooding and landslides in the Activity townships. The impact of floods and landslides has damaged the fishponds, and communication has been cut off for over one week.

During the reporting period, climate change and its detrimental impacts continued to be unavoidable for fish farmers in Magway area, as 12 grow-out ponds and 3 nurse ponds are completely damaged with loss of all fish and 60 grow-out ponds affected partial damaged.

The townships of Pindaya, Hsihseng, Hopong, and Nyaungshwe, part of the MFF Southern Shan Activity, experienced heavy rainfall and flooding in August and September, largely due to climate change. In Hsihseng Township, three days of continuous rain from August 12th to 14th caused severe damage. The Inlay region was also severely impacted by Typhoon YAGI, which brought three consecutive days of rain in early September, leading to floods across 445 villages in 35 village groups. Of these, 171 villages experienced significant flooding. Additionally, five villages supported by the Activity's Revolving Fund were reported to be struggling with loan repayments due to a lack of employment during these challenging months.

As this year, farmers had suffered from over flooding in Kachin where Activity office is stationed. The water reached over the danger-level nearly 7ft and all the important documents, stationery and office furniture from our office were destroyed by the flood. And then, 52 fishponds which had already been stocked with fish were also flooded. Therefore, we distributed fingerlings to farmers for the second time whose ponds were flooded to re-stock fish.

8.6. Communications

With the assistance of WorldFish Headquarters (HQ) communication department and IECT Coordinator, all the Feed the Future Burma Fish for Livelihoods Activity’s information, education, communication (IEC) and training materials were branded according to the USAID approved branding and marking guidelines. The major communication products developed are accessible in the Annex “Fish for Livelihoods IEC documentation list”. From January to July 2024, the following list of extension and training materials, awareness-raising materials were printed and distributed among the Activity participants and non-participants through training, event and digital mobile applications.

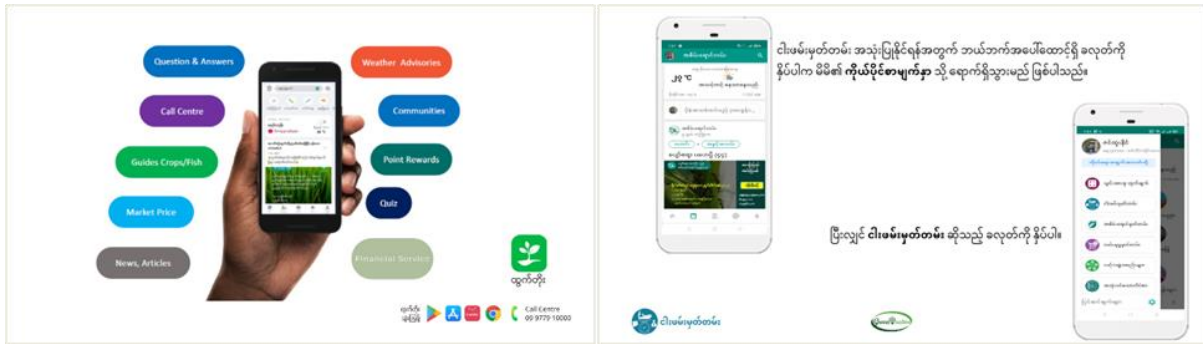
- Why fish pamphlet
- BMP for vegetable production systems
- Traditional Fish processing recipe
- Guide on dried fish processing
- Recipe card fish pumpkin ball
- Small Indigenous Species (SIS) partial harvest guide
- Small Indigenous Species (SIS) question and answer sheet
- Feed the Future Burma Fish for Livelihoods factsheet
- Poster Important factors for a healthy and happy family
- Poster Toilet and sanitation
- Poster_1000 days
- Poster Myanmar Mola comic story
- Poster Ceramic water filter
- Small-Scale Aquaculture (SSA) farmer guidebook
- Hatchery operation on Carp manual
- Nursery pond management of Carp species
- Fish feed nutrition and management in Aquaculture
- Good post-harvest practices for a fresh fish trading guidebook
- Good fish processing practices guidebook

In this fiscal year, the Activity team distributed a total of 11,336 IEC and training materials including wall calendar with key messages on SSA, Nutrition and WASH and poster with illustrations on chilling of fish with clean crushed ice. The distribution list can be seen in the Annex “IECT distribution list 2023-2024”.

The USAID approved a 6-months (from September 2024 to February 2025) timeline period on full and partial waivers regarding the branding and marking guideline to the Activity areas where complex situations occur. The extension of timeline of the waiver will be needed to seek and review bi-annually.

To access information on SSA and improved human nutrition, the Activity promoted its produced IEC and training documentation through two mobile applications Htwet Toe and Green Way. Virtual training on using the mobile applications was delivered to the Activity field staff from AYO, BRAC, KMSS and MFF in the fiscal year. The Activity also encouraged Activity participants to register and to use the mobile applications.

From January to July 2024, the Activity field staff delivered one day of face-to-face training on Htwet Toe mobile application (App) to direct beneficiary farmers on how to download, install, register and use of the mobile App. A total of 233 (24% women) people attended the Htwet Toe App using training and a total of 277 (27% women) people attended the Green Way App using training.



On September 30, 2024, Village Link had 6,430 farmers registered as Htwet Toe mobile application users. In this quarter (Jul to Sep), 1,138,631 people visited the 33 fish-related news, nutrition and articles uploaded to the aquaculture page. There have been 1,100,718 visitors to the 32 fish technical guidelines. The Htwet Toe App report can be accessed in the annex “Village Link (Htwet Toe App) report”. Htwet Toe App link: <https://htwettoe.com/>

Moreover, with input and coordination of WorldFish Fish technical team, developing fish feed calculator was completed in this fiscal year. And piloting training and promotion of using App Tools were conducted by the local field staff from Village Link. A total number of 2,829 (21% women) users registered and used the Fish Feed Calculator web link: <https://htwettoe.com/fish-feed>.

On September 30, 2024, Greenovator had 122,158 users registered in the Activity implementation area. Among them 5,912 users were farmers. 18,980 people visited the 25 fish-related news, nutrition, and articles uploaded to the aquaculture page. The Green Way App report can be accessed in the Annex “Greenovator (Green Way App) Report”. Green Way App link: <https://greenwaymyanmar.com/>

GPS locations of Feed the Future Burma Fish for Livelihoods SSA farmers

With the support of field team and IPs from AYO, BRAC Myanmar, KMSS and MFF, collection of the updated GPS location data for active grow-out ponds in year 1 (2021-22) 1,013 ponds, year 2 (2022-23) 977 ponds and year 3 (2023-2024) 1,104 were completed in September 2024.

8.7. Capacity development

From November 2023 to May 2024, USAID’s Feed the Future Burma Fish for Livelihoods Activity conducted capacity building trainings to its field implementation staff from AYO, BRAC, KMSS and MFF, especially for new staff who joined in the fiscal year 2023-2024. With the main course of Training of Trainer (ToT) SSA and Improved Human Nutrition, the following list of trainings describe in the table below were delivered to provide staff with the necessary knowledge, skill and resources to enhance their performance, productivity and professional growth which is necessary and ensuring the success of the Activity. A total of 90 (54% women) staff received at least one course of the ToT trainings from the Activity. The field staff will in turn train Activity participants (direct and indirect beneficiaries) to supply affordable nutritious food for their household and earn extra income.



Table 19 Staff Capacity Building in fiscal year 2023-2024

Training topic	Male	Female	Total
TOT on SSA, Nutrition, WASH & Gender	13	9	22
Participatory Community Appraisal (PCA)	2	2	4
Market System Development	18	18	36
Refresher M&E Data Tools Package	16	10	26
Htwet Toe App usage and its extensive feature	18	18	36
Green way App usage and its extensive feature	18	18	36
Production of value-added products from local Fish	7	6	13
Water Quality Management in SSA Pond	23	19	42
Gender training	3	12	15
Grand Total	118	112	230

Participatory Community Appraisal (PCA) and Activity orientation workshop

From November 2023 to May 2024, the USAID’s Feed the Future Burma Fish for Livelihoods Activity introduced its main Small-Scale Aquaculture (SSA) programme and other intervention activities Nutrition, WASH, Gender and Market System in the four states and regions: Shan, Magway, Mandalay and Sagaing. Through the PCA workshop, the Activity identified potential new villages from the townships and selected new grow out farmers in the areas. A total of 1,526 (34% women) participants joined in the fiscal year 2023-2024. The most common key findings are lack of knowledge on fish growing, water scarcity, some areas of ponds rely on rainwater and some areas of ponds rely on tube well, different climate change impact, transportation barriers on geography and distance to providers for buying fish seeds and feeds in the areas.

SSA and Improved Human Nutrition modules training

From December 2023 to September 2024, with the support of Field Coordinators, Implementing Partners Ar Yone Oo, BRAC, KMSS and MFF field staff delivered the training for three days to new Activity farmers in Five states and regions. The course was divided into three modules.

Table 20 SSA modules

Session Title	Duration	Key Topics Covered
SSA and Improved Human Nutrition Module-1	Day-1	Pre-stocking and stocking management, food and nutrition and classification of food according to function
SSA and Improved Human Nutrition Module-2	Day-2	Post-stocking management and Human nutrition: Fertilization, liming, feeding, sampling and essential micro-nutrient
SSA and Improved Human Nutrition Module-3	Day-3	Post-stocking management and Human nutrition: Fish harvesting, marketing, nutritional value of small fishes, dike cropping management, complementary feeding and caring of women health



Through the hands-on training the participants learned how to take good care of their pond by following better management practices recommended by the Activity. A total of 1,021 (34% women) direct beneficiaries and 325 (47% women) indirect beneficiaries attended and provided feedback on enhance their knowledge of fish farming, good practices of monitoring pond water and sampling fish weight monthly. Moreover, the refresher training on SSA and Improved Human Nutrition course was delivered to last year's Activity farmers for one day.

From February to August 2024, the USAID's Feed the Future Burma Fish for Livelihoods Activity delivered two-days hands-on training on induced breeding of Common Carp and nursing management to hatchery and nursery farmers in five states and regions. All participants attended actively and explored the practical knowledge and strategy for accessing high-quality fish seed which is still high in demand within the local market and consumption. With USAID's technical assist, the Activity promoted more fish seed productions from hatcheries and nurseries. The Activity villages which have barriers in transportation and accessing the fish seeds can now solve the problems.

From February to September 2024, USAID's support feed miller farmers received two-days in-person training on fish feed production and management. The participants used the locally available raw materials and ingredients such as rice-bran, pea cake, corn, cassava and dried small fish etc. and produced powder fish feeds, and sinking pellet feeds in different sizes for fry, fingerling and big fish. Through the hands-on training not only can the farmers manage good quality fish feed but also other grow-out farmers from the local area can access fish feed for different grading with reasonable price.



From May to June 2024, Small-Scale Aquaculture farmers or entrepreneurs from the Activity received Business Planning training to map their hatchery, nursery, feed production and grow-out business plans in ahead of operations. From the training, participants learned why, when and how to draft a business plan content which is composed of basic eight components. In addition, the presentation of each group of business planning was very productive and impressive through their group work with simple business plan templates.

In March, July and August 2024, the USAID's Activity selected SSA farmers and fish processors from Southern Shan received hands-on training on value-added fish products. The practical demonstration on fish paste, fish sauce, fermented fish was done with the local available fish species. Through the training participants gradually follow post-harvest good fish handling and fish processing practices. Moreover, the safe quality fish products help them improve their income and provide safe and fresh fish to consumers.

In November 2023 and March 2024, with the assistance of Agriculture Specialist consultant hired by the Activity, SSA farmers received local vegetables seed production training in Sinbaungwe Township. From the productive training, farmers can choose good quality vegetables seed from open-pollinated varieties and to ensure sustainable production of vegetable seeds to the local.

Other Activity interventions and extension training entitled “farmer record keeping, financial management, nutrition and WASH awareness, gender equity awareness and market system” were delivered. A total of 1,920 (36% women) direct beneficiaries and 740 (49% women) indirect beneficiaries from the five states and regions received at least one topic and or course of the trainings from the Activity respectively.

Table 21 Farmer Capacity Building in fiscal year 2023-2024

Training Topic	Male	Female	Total
SSA module 1 training	618	318	936
SSA module 2 training	513	275	788
SSA module 3 training	481	296	777
SSA module 2 and 3 training	84	49	133
SSA refresher training	349	264	613
Farmer record bookkeeping training	305	140	445
Key messages on SSA and Nutrition training	35	5	40
Nursery pond management training	18	3	21
Induced breeding Carp species training	108	28	136
Catfish rising with tarpaulin training	10	15	25
Tilapia SEX Reversal Training	8		8
Fish feed production and management training	30	7	37
Seed Production Training	47	29	76
Financial and fund management training	88	44	132
Refresher financial and fund management training	49	20	69
Green Way App Training	201	76	277
Htwet Toe App Training	177	56	233
Business Planning Training	28	9	37
Market System Development Training	26	12	38
Good Fish processing practices training	1	11	12
Good Post-Harvest Management Training	206	75	281
Ice plant operators Good Manufacturing Practices Training	10	1	11
Production of value-added products from local Fish training	12	22	34
Post-harvest Management and Value-added Training	14	26	40
Water quality management training	81	96	177
Gender equity awareness training	58	56	114
Nutrition WASH & gender Training	10	6	16
WASH Hygiene Promotion training	92	37	129
SSA ToT training to AP	9	4	13
Pond Monitoring and Reporting Training for AP	17		17
Grand Total	3685	1980	5665

From July to September 2024, with the lead of WorldFish Field Coordinator from Kachin state and Aquaculture Officer, the USAID Myanmar is piloting an aquaculture resilience project in PutaO township. The following list of local capacity building was conducted to SSA farmers who are direct

and indirect beneficiaries in the project areas. A total of 42 (36% women) project farmers and 190 (40% women) non-project farmers from PutaO township received at least one topic and or course of the trainings from the project respectively.

Table 22 Local capacity building to SSA farmers from PutaO from July to September 2024

Training Topic	Male	Female	Total
Catfish Breeding On-site training	2		2
Fish Processing Training	20	7	27
Fish Production Value Chain Training	59	35	94
Fish Seed Nursing Training	23		23
Improved hygiene practices training on fresh fish	31	23	54
WASH and Nutrition Awareness training	30	33	63
Grand Total	165	98	263

Activity Expenditure vs Budget: FY2023-FY2024 (all figures in USD)

Expenditure from the USD17,000,000 F4L six-year grant 15 Sep 2021 – 14 Sep 2027 showing 51% spent at 30 September 2024.

No.	Budget Line Items	Approved Budget	Prior Period Cumulative Expenditure	Current Period Expenditure	Cumulative To Date Expenditure	Budget Balance	% spent as end of Sep 2024
			Period from 15 Sep 2021 to 30 June 2024	Period from 1 July 2024 to 30 September 2024			f = d / a * 100
		a	b	c	d = b + c	e = a - d	
I	Personnel (Salaries and benefits)	5,670,479	2,214,705	242,192	2,456,898	3,213,581	43%
II	Travel and Transportations	434,514	118,693	12,668	131,361	303,153	30%
III	Supplies	610,151	217,512	27,350	244,862	365,289	40%
IV	Contractual/Sub-grants	5,690,000	2,404,496	520,157	2,924,653	2,765,347	51%
V	Others	1,713,500	1,283,254	178,086	1,461,340	252,160	85%
Total Direct Costs		14,118,644	6,238,660	980,454	7,219,114	6,899,530	51%
Total Indirect Costs		2,881,356	1,273,196	200,093	1,473,289	1,408,067	51%
GRAND TOTAL		17,000,000	7,511,856	1,180,547	8,692,403	8,307,597	51%

Expenditure for the current year-three reporting period = 93% of allocated funds spent.

Obligated Amount	Cumulative Disbursement as of September 2024	Expenditure In September 2024	Balance end of September 2024	% Spent as of the end of September 2024
a	b	c	d = a - b - c	e = ((b + c) / a) * 100
3,400,000	2,555,671	595,105	249,225	93%

Annex: Activity staff list

Staff name	Title	Duty Station	Status	Remarks
Mohammed, Essam	Director General	Penang, Malaysia	Active	
Mohd Ikbal, Shabeen	Portfolio Manager	Penang, Malaysia	Close	Departure July 2024
Chin, Hooi Bing	Senior Program Associate	Penang, Malaysia	Active	
Tan, Su Ching	Grants and Contracts Manager	Penang, Malaysia	Active	
Nadarajan, Vithiya	Accounts Manager (Finance and Grants)	Penang, Malaysia	Active	
Michael J. Akester	Chief of Party	Yangon	Active	
Aung Zaw Win @ Aubery	Deputy Chief of Party	Mandalay	Active	
Kyaw Moe Oo	Field Coordinator	Southern Shan State	Active	
Yu Maung	Field Coordinator	Kachin	Active	
Kyaw Win Khaing	Field Coordinator	Penang, Malaysia Mandalay	Active	
Aung Myo Lwin	Field Coordinator	Sagaing	Active	
Sai Noot	Field Coordinator	Eastern Shan State	Active	
Quennie Vi Rizaldo	Human Nutrition Specialist	Yangon	Active	
Syed Aman Ali	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Specialist	Penang, Malaysia	Close	Departure August 2024
Hsu Myat Nway	Monitoring & Evaluation Coordinator	Yangon	Active	
Naw Christine Pan Wai	Monitoring & Evaluation Coordinator	Yangon	Active	
Htet Htet Khaing	Data Management Specialist	Yangon	Active	
Su Su Mon	Field & Data Associate	Southern Shan State	Active	
Kay Khaing Soe	Administrative Assistant	Mandalay	Active	
Nay Zar Tun	Finance Officer	Mandalay	Active	
Lae Lae Kyaw	Finance Officer	Yangon	Active	
May Thu Oo	Financial Controller	Yangon	Active	
NweNweKyu	Cleaner	Mandalay	Active	
Than Than Win	Cleaner	Yangon	Active	
Aung Myat Thu	Market System Specialist	Yangon	Active	
Tin Tin Oo	Gender & Inclusion Specialist	Yangon	Close	Departure September 2024
Hnin Wyut Hmone Soe	Information, Education, Communication & Training Assistant	Mandalay	Active	
Nang Tin May Win	Information, Education, Communication & Training Coordinator	Mandalay	Active	
Than Than Swe	Activity Support Officer	Yangon	Active	

Staff name	Title	Duty Station	Status	Remarks
Ohm Mar Nyunt	Activity Accountant	Yangon	Active	Departure September 2024
Naw Keller Phaw	Finance Officer	Yangon	Active	
Saw Du Du	Admin Officer	Yangon	Close	Departure March 2024
Naw Nay Thah Paw	HR & Administration Specialist	Yangon	Active	
Naw Paw Lily	Aquaculture Officer	Putao	Active	Joined July 2024
Phoo Wai Myo	Gender & Inclusion Specialist	Yangon	Active	Joined Sep 2024
Ei Ei Phyoo	M&E Coordinator	Yangon	Active	Joined Sep 2024

Annex: Other

[The RESILIENCE pilot project Putao.pdf](#)

[Annex for IECT](#)

[Annex for M&E](#)

[Annex for IWMI](#)