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## Myanmar COVID-19 Response: Livelihoods support to remittance dependent communities

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Name of consultant(s): Frances Barns

Name of Evaluation Manager: Sohana Samrin Chowdhury

Evaluation Office oversight: Pamornrat Pringsulaka

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## Table of Acronyms

<b>AES</b>	Australasian Evaluation Society
<b>CBM</b>	Central Bank of Myanmar
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organisations
<b>CCPDS</b>	Cross Cutting Policy Drivers
<b>CDI</b>	Covenant Development Institute
<b>CNF</b>	Chin National Front
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisations
<b>DAC</b>	Development Assistance Committee
<b>DWCP</b>	Decent Work Country Program
<b>DWT</b>	Decent Work Technical Support Team
<b>EAO</b>	Ethnic Armed Organisation
<b>EIIP</b>	Employment Intensive Investment Programme
<b>ESP</b>	Ethnic Service Provider
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organisation
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussions
<b>HRP</b>	Humanitarian Response Plan
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organisation
<b>IOM</b>	International Organisation of Migration
<b>KIA</b>	Kachin Independence Army
<b>KII</b>	Key Informant Interviews
<b>LRB</b>	Local Resource Base
<b>KNU</b>	Karen National Union (KNU)
<b>KLF</b>	Kah Law Foundation
<b>OSH</b>	Occupational Safety and Health
<b>MVA</b>	Mountain View Academy
<b>MFAT</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
<b>NCA</b>	National Ceasefire Agreement
<b>NLD</b>	National League of Democracy
<b>NMSP</b>	New Mon State Party
<b>NZL</b>	New Zealand
<b>NZD</b>	New Zealand
<b>O&amp;M</b>	Operation and Management
<b>OCHA</b>	Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>PDF</b>	People's Defense Force
<b>PDO</b>	Project Development Objective
<b>PSC</b>	Project Steering Committee
<b>PWD</b>	Person with Disability
<b>ROAP</b>	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
<b>RBSA</b>	Regular Budget Supplementary Agreement
<b>RPF</b>	Rahmonnya Peace Foundation
<b>SAC</b>	State Administrative Council
<b>SSA-S</b>	Shan State Army-South
<b>TKPSI</b>	Tanintharyi Karen Peace and Security Initiative
<b>TOC</b>	Theory of Change
<b>TOR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>TOT</b>	Training of Trainers
<b>TVET</b>	Technical Vocational Education and Training
<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>UNSERRP</b>	United Nations Strategic Emergency and Rehabilitation Response Plan

<b>UNTCF</b>	United Nations Transitional Cooperation Framework
<b>VDC</b>	Village Development Committee
<b>VIOM</b>	Village Infrastructure Operation and Maintenance

## 1 Executive Summary

The 2010s saw substantial progress on economic growth and poverty reduction in Myanmar. In the first democratic elections in 2015, the largest Burmese civilian party, the National League of Democracy (NLD) won a landslide and thus was able to take the lead in the government. This resulted in an increase in foreign investment in Myanmar and continued economic growth (above 7 percent per year). However, in the years 2020 and 2021 the situation deteriorated immensely when Myanmar economy was hard hit by four substantial shocks – three waves of COVID-19 and a military coup in February 2021 following which conflict in Myanmar quickly increased. This set of shocks interacted with each other to bring devastating effects to the country. In addition to the protests and civilian attacks, there has also been an increase in armed conflict between the military and ethnic armed groups in various parts of the country. The conflict has led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people, who have been forced to flee their homes due to the violence.

The Myanmar *COVID-19 Response: Livelihoods Support to Remittance Dependent Communities* is a 30-month ILO project, funded by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), with a budget of NZD 3 million. The project was initiated by the ILO on 23 September 2020 with an aim to provide safety net for those most vulnerable and affected within the remittance-dependent villages of Karen and Mon States of Myanmar in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic. Longer term recovery support was another key objective of the project, to be ensured through increasing employability and creating key rural infrastructure for the targeted beneficiaries.

The project is based on the Local Resource Base (LRB) Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme (EIIP) modality that has been implemented by the ILO over 40 years in many countries across the world. Lessons from previously implemented EIIP projects of the ILO in Myanmar indicated an acute need in incorporating more skills development activities, with a focus on livelihood skills and Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) courses on subjects that are relevant in the local context, and that improve the employability of the population of the communities.

The project was initially designed for an implementation period of 18 months (from October 2020 to March 2022) but extended until March 2023. Project activities were carried out in Mon, Karen, Bago and Thanintharyi with Local Resource Base (LRB) EIIP carried out in Mon State and TVET training for mixed administration areas in Bago and Thanintharyi States. The initial project design included community infrastructure in collaboration with the EAO, Karen National Union, for Karen State but conflict levels were too high in this region and the partnership was discontinued.

The independent final evaluation aimed to demonstrate accountability<sup>1</sup> to the ILO member states and key national stakeholders and development partners on key results and achievements. The evaluation also sought to promote key learnings based on the experience of implementation and management. The evaluation adheres to the six OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria that serve as the basis upon which evaluative judgements are made including relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact and cross cutting issues including gender. Data collection was conducted in March 2023 using an online modality.

The evaluation found the project was **relevant** on several levels. The infrastructure built with the support of the project addressed perceived needs of communities as the consultation process whereby the Village Development Committees (VDCs) facilitated comprehensive community consultation enabled community members to chose which infrastructure would be built. This differs from some other donor funded infrastructure projects where the donor pre-identifies what

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<sup>1</sup> According to (OECD/DAC, 2002), accountability is the “obligation to demonstrate that work has been conducted in compliance with agreed rules and standards or to report fairly and accurately on performance results vis-à-vis mandated roles and/or plans. This may require a careful, even legally defensible, demonstration that the work is consistent with the contract terms.”

infrastructure will be built. The relevance of the infrastructure to beneficiary needs was evident in the strong appreciation for it by villagers interviewed during the evaluation. The provision of employment addressed community needs for economic support. Consultations revealed that the national economic situation due to the Pandemic, the Coup and global pressures is affecting community members living in villages in Southeast Myanmar. There were indications of food insecurity among beneficiaries and a loss of livelihoods due to recent changing circumstances. This highlighted that the project is relevant in that it is targeting poor and vulnerable community members. The online survey found a reduction in respondents' engagement in farming enterprises, with village-based respondents mentioned that they had trouble bringing their produce to markets in towns and cities because of conflict in surrounding areas and restrictions on movement that were imposed by EAOs.

The evaluation also found that the TVET training is relevant to the needs of beneficiaries for several reasons. The first is the current limitations to agriculture-based livelihood enhancement strategies and intensified need for employment and non-farm enterprises. Second, with villages somewhat isolated from main towns due to conflict, curfews, roadblocks etc there is greater need for services to be available in villages.

The project is relevant to the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and its nexus between humanitarian and development planning for conflict-affected vulnerable rural communities in Southeast Myanmar. Additionally, the project is well-aligned with the priorities laid out in the UN Strategic Emergency and Rehabilitation Response Plan (UN SERRP), which constitutes the fundamental document that outlines the general framework for the engagement of the UN Country Team (UNCT) in Myanmar, given the absence of a signed Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. Upon the conclusion of the UN SERRP, the upcoming UN Transitional Cooperation Framework (TCF) planned to be established in 2023 and put into operation in 2024, the project is also compatible with it. While the evaluation found that the project was consistent with donor and Partner Agency Priorities and Policy Frameworks on the ground the frameworks themselves are fraught. The multisided political conflict has left aid agencies hamstrung. In this situation policy frameworks for the project have been unclear and hard to operationalise.

From the ILO side, the project aligns with the ILO Myanmar Decent Work Country Programme. However, the DWCP expired in 2022 and without a clear legitimate government enabling genuine tripartite engagement, it cannot be renewed. The project also aligns with the relevant Program and Budget (P&B) Outcome 3: Economic, social and environmental transitions for full productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all in so far as the project has contributed to employment among beneficiaries.

***In regard to whether the project addresses major causes of vulnerability*** the evaluation team views the approach as relevant to the livelihood constraints imposed by the complex crisis. Component 1 may not have addressed the most vulnerable people in Myanmar. However, IDPs have been difficult for agencies to access without "doing harm" and the ILO is not a humanitarian agency and is not equipped to operate in conflict zones.

***In regard to the relevance of Project Partnerships***, partnerships at the local level, such as with EAO the New Mon State Party (NMSP), have allowed the ILO has been operational and achieved outputs and outcomes where other developments have been unable to develop a presence. This strategy is to the benefit of community members in EAO areas as the EAOs are the only administrations that have any capacity to deliver services with the NLD overthrown and the SAC focused on using violence to consolidating control. However, the NMSP is one of the more organised, capable and well established as an administration implying that this approach may be more challenging to implement in other EAO areas.

***In regard to the relevance of partnering with CSOs*** the project's partnership with CSOs including CDI and TPKSI and MVA were relevant to the ILOs engagement in Myanmar given the important

role that CSOs are playing in channelling the will of the people and resistance against the illegitimate occupation. However, CSOs are also under threat from the SAC who is refusing to renew the registration of CSOs who oppose them with severe penalties including jail terms for those that continue to operate without registration. The ILO will need to take careful consideration in approaching this issue.

The criterion of **coherence** looks at whether the project coordinated well with other initiatives in the area. In addition to EAOs, the project also built on relationships with CSOs based on Southeast Myanmar RPF and CDI in the provision of TVET training. But there was little other donor activity in the vicinity for the project to coordinate with.

In regard to the criteria of **efficiency**, the evaluation team found that **management arrangements** on the project were well defined and involved the coordination of a range of stakeholders. The strength of these arrangements in terms of promoting technical efficacy and community ownership is verified by the strong support of the EAO and local communities to facilitate the project to go ahead, in spite of the big challenges. The project also received strong political support from the ILO Yangon office whose flexibility and conflict sensitivity were also key. However, the technical backstopping from other ILO offices was minimal in contrast to the previous project which received extensive expert inputs on engineering, economic and resource generation matters from the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) Office in Bangkok.

Regarding **value for money**, the evaluation team found that there were aspects of the approach that were efficient, e.g., drawing on community level human resources for delivery of outputs but the delay in implementation caused inefficiencies. The value of money for TVET training is also questionable with the cost of each TVET student at NZD 1,200 per student IF the equipment and courses are not used for future training. Hopefully they will be.

In regard to the criteria of **effectiveness**, the evaluation found that project results were achieved with some revisions and a year-long no cost extension, despite significant challenges to implementation, stemming from the changing context of the pandemic and the coup. According to findings from the evaluation survey, the project performed well in terms of the outcome indicators with 100% of respondents saying that overall they were happy with the project. In terms of output level results, the project managed to achieve most of results targets. Overall, there were slightly less infrastructure built than targeted, slightly less workdays, slightly less funds that went to the villages, fewer community contractors and slightly less profit for the community contractors. However, the number of households benefiting from short term employment, the number of beneficiaries receiving TVET training and the number of villages targeted were higher than the original targets. In regard to Component 1, the selection of infrastructure projects took place through a clear, transparent and comprehensively consultative process. Under Component 2, the approach taken to the design and implementation of the TVET courses, in collaboration with two local TVET providers, TKPSI and MVA, was comprehensive and thorough.

Project outputs also included activities to reduce the spread of **COVID-19** including Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) training, the display of posters and worksites and the imposition of OSH work practices. In the online survey, 100% of beneficiaries said they thought the COVID-19 mitigation activities on the project were effective.

**Monitoring and evaluation** on the project were detailed and thorough and well disaggregated for gender and social inclusion. Some impact level indicators were covered, such as employment and small business take up by TVET graduates. However, the link between project outputs and higher-level socio-economic outcomes was not extensively articulated through the M&E System.

In regard to the **impact of the project on beneficiaries and the sustainability of these benefits**, on Component 1, the project contributed to effects on the life of beneficiaries in terms of income



for employment and infrastructure available for them to use. However, beneficiaries did perceive some challenging impacts. Contractors expressed that they had difficulty carrying out procurement of the construction materials due to delays in payments and an increase in the price of materials. ILO did revise the construction contracts, but contractors stated that nevertheless, their profits were reduced.

In terms of ensuring the ***Sustainability of outcomes for Component 1*** the main focus has been on maintenance arrangements and sharing arrangements for water systems. The VDCs TORs included establishing Village Infrastructure Operation and Maintenance (VIOM) sub committees after construction had been completed. Funds left over from construction costs were to be invested to provide funds for Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of the infrastructure. About half of the villages have allocated land to grow crops for sale to generate funds for O&M. For water systems, user charging mechanisms were introduced to input into maintenance funds. Another potential sustainable outcome is that the O&M committees may also provide the initial basis for village microfinance systems with flow on economic benefits. During review meetings, several VDC member respondents stated that they were lending O&M funds to villagers with interest as a means of generating income.

A key issue in regard to sustainability of project outcomes relates to ensuring the ongoing availability of equipment, supplies and staffing for health and education facilities. This is clearly a challenge, given the dysfunctional governance environment. Ensuring this was one of the key reasons with the NMSP were invited to participate in the PSC as they provide some support in this area. NMSP Funds are more available for education than health and for this reason the project built more schools than health centres.

In regard to the ***impact and sustainability of Component 2***, an impact assessment conducted by CDI showed that the training was assisting graduates to improve their livelihood and gain more income. More than half (53%) said they have been successful in starting a business or a workshop since graduation with an additional 33% stating they are planning to. However, students also stated that they need more time to gain greater understanding of the course and for practical training. They requested two or three repeats of practical sessions, longer courses and more advanced courses. Students noted that learning in a small group (no more than 10 persons in a class) is better than in a mass group and learning offline is better. (Zoom or Facebook class were not engaging) particularly as they had to pay for data. Also the cost effectiveness of the TVET support was NZD 1,220 per student which is on the high side IF the equipment and modules are not used again, which hopefully they will be.

In regard to cross cutting issues including gender the project performed well. 52% of the workers were female and women were to receive equal pay with men. 45% of VDC members were female as well as 18% of contractors. Among TVET trainees 55% were female and 45% were male. The project also sought to ensure that person with disabilities (PWD) also had opportunities to work on the project. In regard to addressing environmental issues, particularly disaster risk reduction, 5 footbridges were built on the project, allowing for access out of these villages during the wet season, which otherwise cut off due to flooding.

### **Looking forward**

The project is a strong example of an EIP investment from the ILO which generates pro-poor economic growth, village governance, community development and EAO administrative and governance capacity. The addition of TVET training to the mix has been beneficial to people in the area, particularly youth, given that the complex emergency is reducing scope for commercial agriculture. The TVET training appears to have been successful.

With an operational approach focused on “resilience” in a complex emergency involving conflict and displacement, the ILO should continue to implement the successful approach of the current project. The project team have put forward a project to the New Zealand Government for a similar project design involving the LRB approach and TVET training in Tanintharyi, Mon Kayin, Kayah, and Shan States. The management arrangements are also the same with CSOs contracted as Ethnic Service Providers (ESPs), EAOs and their departments on Project Steering Committees. This is a positive development and a worthwhile initiative to support for ILO and the Donor. But the proposal would be enhanced by more detail explaining how the project fits into a wider strategy in the region, how it builds on achievements through the current project and how some problematic aspects in the current project will be addressed in a future one. Issues that require clarification include:

- How the new design will address the conflict issues that have thwarted the current one (e.g., in Kayin State)?
- Given the risks, how the ILO will guarantee conflict sensitivity and a Do No Harm approach?
- How the EAOs will be supported at their different levels of capacity?
- What are the specific strategies for working with IDPs vs non IDPs? Is EIIP realistic in IDP camps?
- How does the TVET work build on previous achievements and how is it suited to a conflict context?

At the current time when change in circumstances are happening very quickly, its important to identify, communication and develop strategies around key issues affecting the operating environment. Returning levels of technical backstopping support to previous levels may assist in this area.

### **Lessons learned**

The following key lessons learned, and responses were generated. Additional lessons learned are included in the body of the report.

Lesson	Proposed Project Response
An approach to programming that combines commitments to equal opportunities for participation with clear and detailed procedures, adequate training and full transparency on matters including finances can be effective in garnering the ownership and commitment of stakeholders.	Continue to expand the implementation of the LRB EIIP implementation “package” in Myanmar with the various guidelines and procedures that have been already developed.
It is possible for Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAO) to move beyond being rebel forces towards becoming administrations capable of decentralised service delivery and public revenue generation even in a context of political instability. By supporting them donors may be able to protect against a collapse of governance during a complex emergency.	Continue to support ethnic armed organisations with differing strategies depending on their varying capacity.
Collaborating with Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs) is an effective way for humanitarian/development partners to	Continue to collaborate with EAOs and promote collaboration to other UN Agencies

Lesson	Proposed Project Response
access communities in hard to reach areas, cut off from Government support. Doing so does not need to imply that the development agency is aligned politically with the EAO.	
TVET training is a useful entry point for development partners due to its increased importance in livelihood strategies in post 2021 Coup Myanmar with constraints on agricultural trade and increase in demand for local services due to constraints on movement between villages and town and across the country. TVET training programs should be of sufficient duration, quality and linked to an understanding of service demand locally, regionally and in ASEAN.	Continue with TVET training developing specific strategies around supporting IDPs and integrating with certification systems and responding to market demand.
As crucial stakeholders in the complex emergency who are leading the resistance to the SAC and have on-the-ground understanding, it's important to nourish relationships with CSOs, particularly those with experience, capacity and values that align with the ILO. Care must be taken to ensure conflict sensitivity and Do No Harm	Continue collaboration with current experienced and effective CSOs whose values align with the ILO. Seek to develop relationships with others.

### **Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1:** Given the results of the project, the ILO should continue to implement the successful approach involving the same components and management arrangements with the EAOs, ESPs etc. However, the proposal should be detail explain how the project fits into a wider strategy in Southeast Myanmar, how it builds on achievements through the current project and how some problematic aspects in the current project will be addressed in a future one. In particular, the project should articulate the different strategies for working with displaced and non-displaced people and how the modality is suitable for displaced people. The project should also take into account the impact that the conflict may have on women and men differently. Considering the different genders and social groups an intersectional analysis of social groups affected by the conflict should be conducted. Adding some of this information would assist the donor in its funding decisions.

**Recommendation 2:** The ILO should support areas which are vulnerable to conflict and displacement with suitable modalities such as safe migration training, perhaps being provided from Thailand and TVET training, perhaps through the use of a mobile clinic or video training as a last resort.

**Recommendation 3** The ILO should promote “resilience” as an overarching framework for development partner engagement in Myanmar. “Resilience” appears to be appropriate as a high - level goal in the current complex emergency in Myanmar rather than focusing on the Humanitarian and Development Nexus or the Peace and Development Nexus. The latter suggest progress and resolution is taking place when in fact this is not the case. Resilience focuses on community members’ ability to get on with their lives in ongoing difficult circumstances.

**Recommendation 4:** The ILO should continue collaboration with current experienced and effective CSOs whose values align with the ILO and seek to develop relationships with others. The project team needs to assess and articulate the performance of the CSOs and justify how this affect future funding decisions. The ILO should also carefully consider how to approach the problem of non-renewal of CSO registration, adopting a flexible approach but being mindful of the risks to CSOs.

**Recommendation 5:** The ILO should continue to focus on and expand TVET training in collaboration with effective CSO partners. The ILO should articulate, what are the features of this strategy that make it appropriate for complex emergency involving conflict and displacement? The project team need to articulate how the investment already made will be used and built on. The following specific recommendations have been garnered:

- it would be useful to make available multi-level TVET courses moving from basic to advanced and/or longer courses
- There should be a focus on linking with ASEAN skills and qualifications frameworks
- Continue to focus on in-person delivery with online/video training provided as a back-up or as a last resort (eg in conflict areas). Where online training is provided, internet access of participants must also be taken into consideration.
- Consider mobile training operations in situations where beneficiaries can't easily move around
- Conduct village level workforce planning as part of the TVET training strategy to ensure the right level of market demand, there should not be too few or too many people with the same type business.

**Recommendation 6:** The ILO should consider linking with other initiatives focused on access to finance for TVET training to start a business. Although TVET training is effective in assisting beneficiaries to start a business, lack of access to capital remains an impediment.

**Recommendation 7:** The ILO should look for funding opportunities which might support longer term engagement in villages or promote to other development partners opportunities to work in villages were the ILO has built infrastructure. Through successive EIIP projects the ILO is only providing one-off short-term support in each village for one or two infrastructure projects. It would be useful to have a sense of ILO's broader strategy. To facilitate this, medium term strategies for community empowerment and good governance in Southeast Myanmar and beyond should be articulated. Benefits achieved over the longer term should be documented. M&E strategies and indicators should be developed for longer term and more intangible objectives.

**Recommendation 8:** The ILO should consider minimising the number of transactions made to community contractors, notwithstanding the role of tranche payments in performance management.

**Recommendation 9:** The ILO should dedicate some technical backstopping to the future EIIP projects in Myanmar due to a gap in the project in the areas of socio-economic analysis, strategic thinking and future resource raising.

## 2 Project Background

### 2.1 Country context

Myanmar, a least developed country, made significant achievements in economic development and poverty reduction over the last decade. Decades under military rule left Myanmar very poor with high economic inequality, and social, religious, and ethnic divisions. However, in 2008 a new Constitution allowed for increased civilian participation in political governance although the military de facto power remained in the hand of the military. A gradual but calculated liberalization was allowed to begin in 2011, under a transitional military government, setting off a partial transition from military to civilian rule. This included market based economic reforms and the introduction of a military led peace process to commence a resolution of decades long civil conflict between the military (*Tatmadaw*) and Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs). The 2010s saw substantial progress on economic growth and poverty reduction. In the first democratic elections in 2015, the largest Burmese civilian party, the National League of Democracy (NLD) won a landslide and thus was able to take the lead in the government, this resulted in an increase in foreign investment in Myanmar and continued economic growth (above 7 percent per year).

However, in the years 2020 and 2021 the situation deteriorated immensely when Myanmar economy was hard hit by four substantial shocks – three waves of COVID-19 and a military coup in February 2021 following which conflict in Myanmar quickly increased. This set of shocks interacted with each other to bring devastating effects to the country.

**Effects of COVID-19** As of March 21 2023, there have been 633,933 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and over 19,490 deaths in the country with the majority of cases taking place between June 2021 and May 2022.<sup>2</sup> The pandemic put a strain on Myanmar's already fragile healthcare system, with shortages of medical supplies and equipment, as well as healthcare workers. The National League for Democracy (NLD) Government and then the Military implemented various measures to try to control the spread of the virus, including lockdowns, travel restrictions, and the closure of schools and businesses.

The economic impact of the pandemic has also been significant, with many businesses forced to close and many people losing their jobs. The breakdown in governance and lack of coordination caused by the military coup compromised the pandemic response exacerbated the public health and economic challenges facing the country.

**Effects of the Coup** On February 1, 2021, the military in Myanmar staged a coup and overthrew the democratically elected government led by Aung San Suu Kyi. This led to widespread protests and civil disobedience across the country, with many people demanding the restoration of democracy and the release of political prisoners. The military responded with violence, using live ammunition and other forms of force to disperse protesters and suppress dissent. A civilian resistance group, known as the People's Défense Force (PDF) emerged in response to the coup. The PDF has been involved in clashes with the military and has tended to engage in guerrilla style warfare including street battles with the security forces. In addition to the protests and civilian attacks, there has also been an increase in armed conflict between the military and ethnic armed groups in various parts of the country. Some of the areas where the fighting has been particularly intense include:

- Kachin State: The Kachin Independence Army (KIA) has been fighting the military in Kachin State since 2011. The conflict has displaced thousands of people and has resulted in numerous casualties.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://covid19.who.int/region/searo/country/mm>

- Shan State: The Shan State Army-South (SSA-S) and other EAOs have been fighting the military in Shan State for many years. The conflict has intensified since the coup, with the military launching airstrikes and ground offensives against the EAOs.
- Kayin State: The Karen National Union (KNU) has been fighting the military in Kayin State since the coup. The conflict has led to the displacement of thousands of people and has resulted in numerous casualties.
- Chin State: The Chin National Front (CNF) has been fighting the military in Chin State since the coup. The conflict has led to the displacement of thousands of people and has resulted in numerous casualties.

The conflict has led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people, who have been forced to flee their homes due to the violence. Many of these people are now living in temporary shelters or with host families, and they are in urgent need of food, water, and medical care. According to the UN, an estimated 1,704,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) were reported across the country as of 6 March 2023, including 1,376,000 people newly displaced since February 2021 and estimated refugee movements to India and Thailand since Feb 2021 reached 72,000. Latest figures suggest that **17.5 million people require humanitarian aid in 2023, compared with 1 million** before the takeover. The country's Southeast Kayin, Kayah, Mon and Shan states as well as Bago (East) and Tanintharyi region's account for more than half of the newly displaced civilians. Another conflict area with pressing humanitarian needs is the North-West including Chin State, Magway Region and Sagaing Region<sup>3</sup>.

The Myanmar economy has been hard hit by the conflict in combination with the pandemic as well as global issues such as the war in Ukraine. In 2021 the economy contracted by 18% and then grew by 3% in 2022. This meant that Myanmar GDP was 13% lower than in 2019 whereas through East Asia and the Pacific all other large countries' GDP is recovering to pre pandemic levels by 2022/23. In 2022 40% of the population was living below the national poverty level. A complex range of factors have constrained the economy including restrictions on movement due to conflict and controls on movement due to the pandemic, electricity outages, inflation (which in March 2022) ran at 17.3% including rise in prices of imported inputs, consumer goods, fuel, transport and the cost of running generators, logistics and supply chain disruptions, financial sector disruptions, uncertainty in the business environment due to new and inconsistent licensing restrictions on trade, exchange rate controls, foreign currency surrender requirements.

Armed clashes between the military and various ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) and people's defense forces (PDFs) have become a regular part of life in multiple states and regions. Increased Security checks, curfews, roadblocks, and arbitrary arrests have also negatively impacted people's freedom of movement, employment, and economic activities. The conflict-affected communities remain particularly vulnerable and exposed to numerous risks due to a shortage of food, fuel, and other commodities. Many people affected by the crisis in Myanmar have been forced to turn to negative coping mechanisms in order to survive, such as cutting back on food, selling their possessions, dropping out of school, engaging in risky migration, and promoting child labor/marriages.

**Effect of the Coup on Progress on Gender Equality.** The military coup has placed an unaccountable military with a history of gender-based violence in control of every aspect of

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<sup>3</sup> <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/02/1111812>

government. Beyond the direct threat this poses to women’s physical safety, this rule—if left unchecked—will reinvigorate Myanmar’s long history of patriarchal oppression.

Before the coup, a trend towards gender equality was taking place within Myanmar’s nascent and quasi-democratic institutions. Women’s civil society organizations, including the Gender Equality Network and Women’s League of Burma had been tackling traditional patriarchal norms and stereotypes through campaigns involving leadership workshops, grassroots advocacy to change gender stereotypes and perceptions, and work within political parties to promote and elect women. Moreover, feminist advocates such as Member of Parliament Shwe Shwe Sein Latt, had begun being elected into parliament. Correspondingly, the percentage of women in leadership positions steadily increased. In the November 2020 elections, women accounted for 17 percent of elected parliamentarians at all levels of government, an increase of 4 percentage points from the 2015 elections and 12 percentage points from the 2011 elections. And even though Aung San Suu Kyi wasn’t a staunch supporter of women’s or ethnic rights, Myanmar had a female head of state. In 2018, Myanmar ranked 148<sup>th</sup> in the world on the gender inequality index, and in 2019, it had risen to 118<sup>th</sup>. Women’s progress was slow and piecemeal, but steady, especially given the ingrained sexism of the previous junta.

However, this progress has taken a U-turn post-coup, since the, the Myanmar military is a patriarchal institution that views women as, at best, in need of protection, and, at worst, incapable of exercising decision-making power and will never take forward the institutional and societal changes necessary to dismantle pervasive gender discrimination. The junta has replaced national-level politicians, including ministers and Supreme Court justices, as well as regional and local officials. Almost every official appointed to replace the deposed government is male. For example, the 16-member State Administrative Council formed by the military to govern Myanmar following the coup, includes only one woman, Daw Aye Nu Sein, a member of the Arakan National Party who was a fierce critic of Aung San Suu Kyi’s National League for Democracy party.

Moreover, the Military ruled Myanmar for more than half a century so history tells us where the country might be headed. Under decades of military rule, with its culture of militarization and hypermasculinity, social norms and roles dictated that women and girls should take charge of the household, family, and other caretaking responsibilities. Men were considered natural leaders and women suitable only for support roles and in need of male protection. This patriarchal mindset is stated clearly in the military-drafted 2008 constitution, which provides, for example, that certain jobs “are suitable for men only” and repeatedly refers to women as mothers.<sup>4</sup>

## 2.2 Project background

The Myanmar COVID-19 Response: Livelihoods support to remittance dependent communities is a 27-month ILO project, funded by the New Zealand MFAT, with a budget of NZD 3 million. The project was initiated by the ILO on 23 September 2020 with an aim to provide safety net for those most vulnerable and affected within the remittance-dependent villages of Karen and Mon States of Myanmar in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic. Longer term recovery support was another key objective of the project, to be ensured through increasing employability and creating key rural infrastructure for the targeted beneficiaries.

The project is based on the Local Resource Base (LRB) Employment Intensive Infrastructure Project (EIIP) modality that has been implemented by the ILO over 40 years in many countries across the world. The LRB approach is based on the idea that local resources, including natural, human, social and institutional resources, can be harnessed to create economic opportunities and

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<sup>4</sup> <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/03/23/myanmar-coup-women-human-rights-violence-military/>

improve the well-being of local communities. The EIIP approach involves a participatory process that engages local stakeholders, including government, private sector, civil society and community groups, in identifying and prioritising local economic development opportunities. The approach also emphasises the importance of building local capacities and institutions to support economic development and promoting social inclusion by ensuring the equal participation of men and women and the participation of people with disabilities.

Lessons from previously implemented employment-intensive investments in rural infrastructure (EIIP) projects of the ILO in Myanmar indicated an acute need in incorporating more skills development activities, with a focus on livelihood skills and TVET courses on subjects that are relevant in the local context, and that improve the employability of the population of the communities. The project, therefore, also builds on the lessons and good practices established by the three EIIP projects previously implemented by the ILO in Myanmar, and leverages the critical mass developed through those previous cycles of engagement and capacity development.

### 2.3 Project duration

The project was initially designed for an implementation period of 18 months (from October 2020 to March 2022). Owing to the political crisis and over four-months of complete suspension of field activities (February to May 2021), combined with the rapidly spreading third wave of COVID-19 transmission in mid-2021, the project received a total twelve-months extension for implementation. As per the agreed new timeline, the project will close on 31 March 2023.

### 2.4 Geographical coverage

Originally the project interventions were expected to cover areas under the sole administration of Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAO) as well as areas under mixed administration with the government in the two states namely Karen and Mon. However, due to rising conflicts which constrained ILO's engagement with the pre-identified Ethnic Service Provider (ESP) to carry out project interventions in Karen state, the project ceased any intervention in the mixed administrative areas and expanded its coverage (for TVET training courses under Output 2) for Karen ethnic remittance-dependent communities in Bago and Tanintharyi Regions in June 2021. Within these areas, the project selected isolated clusters of villages that are deprived of government support and have large numbers of highly affected, vulnerable, and poor population. Project activities were carried out in Dawei District, the Three Pagoda Pass, Kyar Inn Seik Gyi and Phalan village.

### 2.5 Management arrangements

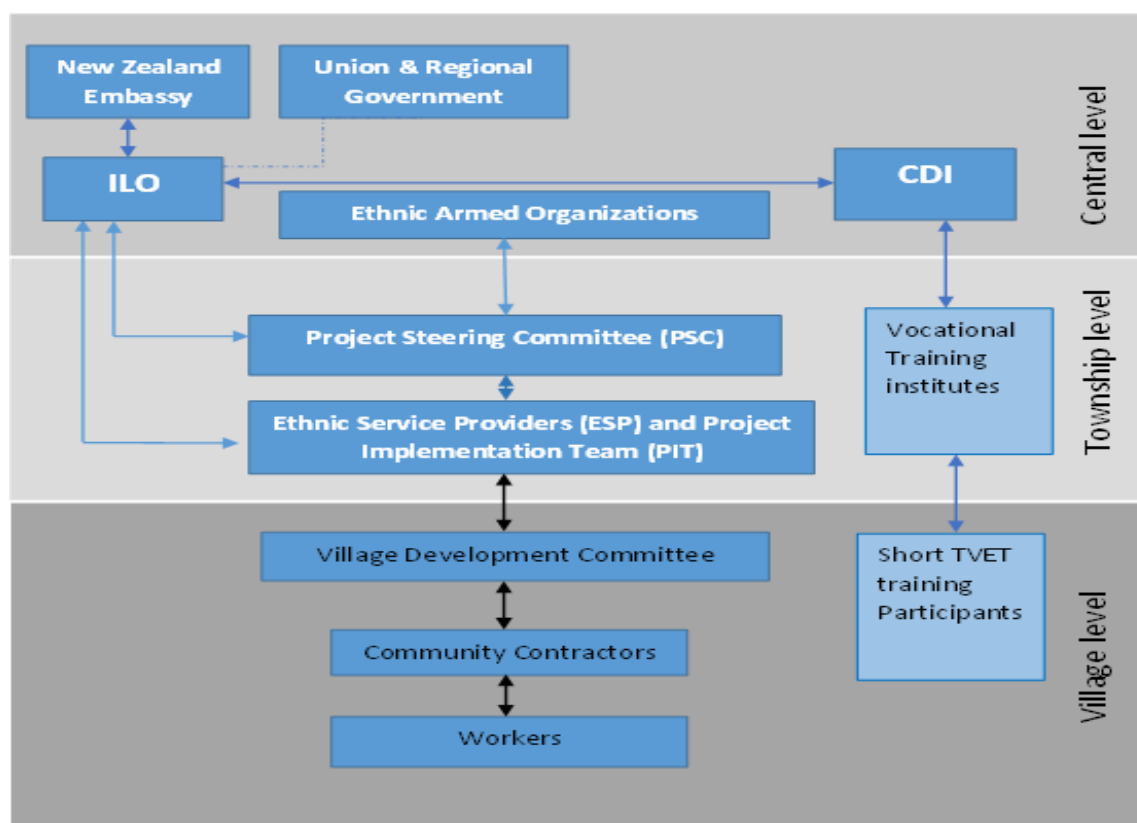
The ILO Liaison Office in Yangon is responsible for overall management and coordination of the project. The ILO team for this Project includes an Infrastructure Specialist/Project Manager, a National Project Engineer, an Assistance Finance & Admin Officer and a Driver.

The project is implemented by the ILO, in partnership and close coordination with two national implementing partners who has a long presence and trusted relationships with both local Karen and Mon Service Providers in the proposed project areas in assisting conflict-affect communities. The partners are (i) Covenant Development Institute (CDI), (i) Rahmonnya Peace Foundation (RPF), an ESP. The project intervention takes place within the scope of those Implementation Agreements signed between the ILO and the national partners. According to the project design, a third implementation agreement was supposed to be signed with another ESP to implement activities in Karen state. This had to be postponed as the ESP was unable to renew their registration certificate to operate because of the difficulties posed by 2021 Myanmar coup d'état.



Figure 1 shows the project organogram including the partner organisations that involved in project implementation. The Figure shows that the Ethnic Armed Organisations are involved at management level. At the township level, Ethnic Service Providers (ESP) oversee the implementation of activities. For Community Infrastructure activities, VDIs oversee community contractors and workers building infrastructure. For TVET Training the ESP oversees Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) delivering TVET services including the Mon View Academy (MVA) and the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TPKSI).

**Figure 1: Project organogram**



## 2.6 Project design

The development objective of the project is that the remittance-dependent communities in EAO areas of Karen State, Mon State and Tanintharyi Region will have better withstood the loss of remittances and be better equipped for future livelihood opportunities.

The table below shows the outcome and outputs that the project has sought to achieve through its interventions. The table also includes 16 performance indicators which are being measured to demonstrate the achievements by the project. Note that the original targets for the output Indicators were revised during the second reporting cycle (April–September 2021) because of the delay in project implementation caused by the political unrest and inflation as well as lockdown due to COVID-19 transmission.

**Table 1: Project results framework**

<p><b>Project Outcome:</b> Selected remittance-dependent communities in Karen State, Mon State and Tanintharyi Region better overcome the immediate economic shocks of COVID-19 through improved small-scale community infrastructure and increased options for employment or self-employment</p>
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Outcome Indicators				
1. 75% of households in the over 30 project villages who consider the project's interventions useful for the community as a whole and are satisfied with the process of the selection of individual beneficiaries and the infrastructure				
2. Extent to which the wage transfers through the Cash-for-Work activities have compensated for the loss of remittances				
3. Time and cost savings related to the improved or constructed infrastructure				
4. Extent to which the increased employability (through skills training) has contributed to (or is expected to contribute to) the loss of remittances caused by the coronavirus pandemic				
5. 100% of constructed or improved infrastructure for which a self-sustainable village-level operation & maintenance committees are established				
OUTPUT 1: Short-term employment provided through cash for work programmes in the construction or improvement of WASH facilities and other essential small-scale public infrastructure in poor, remittance dependent, communities in EAO and mixed administration areas maintenance (O&M) system has been established and operationalized				
Output 1 indicators	Original target		Revised target	
Number of infrastructure assets constructed or improved on time, within budget and as per design specifications	Not less than 70 infrastructure assets		Not less than 55 infrastructure assets	
Number of workdays of short-term employment provided across the targeted villages	About 25,200 workdays for females	About 30,800 workdays for males	About 21,150 workdays for females	About 28,600 workdays for males
Number of poor vulnerable households benefit from the short-term employment	At least 1,100 poor vulnerable households		At least 1,000 poor vulnerable households	
Amount of cash injections in the villages through cash-for work activities	Not less than NZD 1470000		Not less than NZD 1200000	
Established and operational Village Infrastructure Operation and Maintenance Committees (VIOMCs) in each targeted village	30 villages		30 villages	
OUTPUT 2: Short certified TVET courses and non-certified livelihoods and construction training delivered that increase skills and employability of people in remittance dependent communities for domestic and migrant work				
Output 2 indicators	Original target		Revised target	

Number of beneficiaries from among the most affected poor and vulnerable households in participating villagers have successfully completed certified short TVET courses	81 female beneficiaries	99 male beneficiaries	126 female beneficiaries	71 male beneficiaries
% of trainees who completed the TVET courses, will receive on-the-job training in the project's infrastructure construction	At least 50%		Unchanged	
% of beneficiaries who have successfully completed the certified TVET courses, have secured or have been assured job placement	Not less than 50%		Unchanged	
Number of community contractors from participating villages have received training on construction and contract management aspects and have all completed the works in time, in budget and as per specification.	Not less than 70 community contractors (no targets for ratio of males to females)		46 males contractors and 10 female contractors	
Amount of profit each community contractors have earned	Profit in the range of NZD 2,000 to NZD 3,000 each		Unchanged	
All VDCs have received training required to exercise their roles and responsibilities.	30 villages		48 villages	

Source: Project Results Framework and Second Progress Report of the project

### 3 Approach to the Evaluation

#### 3.1 Evaluation purpose

The main purpose of this independent final evaluation is to demonstrate accountability<sup>5</sup> to the ILO member states and key national stakeholders and development partners on key results and

<sup>5</sup> According to (OECD/DAC, 2002), accountability is the "obligation to demonstrate that work has been conducted in compliance with agreed rules and standards or to report fairly and accurately on performance results vis-à-vis mandated roles and/or plans. This may require a careful, even legally defensible, demonstration that the work is consistent with the contract terms."

achievements. The evaluation also sought to promote key learnings based on the experience of implementation and management. Specifically, the evaluation sought to:

- Assess the extent to which the project has achieved its stated objectives and expected results as reflected in the project document and modifications while identifying the support factors and constraints that have led to them
- Assess the extent to which the project helped achieve gender equality and gender related targets and which factors influenced this
- Identify unexpected positive and negative results
- Identify lessons learned and good practices, especially regarding models of interventions that can be applied further
- Establish the validity and the relevance of the project design and implementation strategy in relation to the ILO (i.e. Flagship Programme of Jobs for Peace and Resilience), UN, and Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA)
- Provide recommendations to project stakeholders to promote sustainability and support the completion, expansion or further development of initiatives that were supported by the project.

### 3.2 Evaluation scope

The scope of the final independent evaluation covers the entire Project period i.e., it encompassed all activities and components of the project under the direct responsibility of the ILO from its start in October 2020 and up to March 2023. The evaluation focused the effect of ongoing pandemic and continued political turmoil in the country and how the project has helped the targeted communities and beneficiaries in southeast Myanmar. The evaluation analysed what worked, what did not work, and why this is the case through measurement of progress towards all Project outcomes, intended and unintended.

The evaluation integrates gender equality, disability inclusion & non-discrimination, and impact of the COVID- 19 in line with ILO/EVAL Guidance Note no. 3.1 on integrating gender equality in monitoring and evaluation of projects, and Guidance Note no. 4.5 on stakeholder engagement.

### 3.3 Evaluation client/s

Primary clients of this evaluation are ILO tripartite constituents, and, especially those in Myanmar, and ILO units directly and indirectly involved in supporting the implementation of the Myanmar DWCP. Secondary clients are tripartite constituents in ILO member states, and regional and country offices and Decent Work Technical Support Teams (DWTs) responsible for providing technical assistance to the achievement of the Myanmar DWCP.

### 3.4 Evaluation criteria and questions

The independent final evaluation adhered to the six OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria that serve as the basis upon which evaluative judgements are made.

More specifically, the project has been assessed against the following evaluation criteria:

- Relevance: the extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change
- Coherence, the compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or Institution
- Effectiveness, the extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups

- Efficiency, the extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way
- Project impact, the extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects, and sustainability, the extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue
- Cross cutting policy drivers including gender which involves an assessment of the Gender Framework, the project’s contribution to women’s employment and decision making, the gender responsiveness of infrastructure and integration of environmental concerns and disaster risk reduction.

In order to address the standard ILO evaluation framework, the evaluation will focus on the questions in the Evaluation Question Matrix which can be seen at Annex 4.

### 3.5 Evaluation methodology

The Consultant’s approach to the evaluation involves a qualitative led mixed methodology that combines a review of documentation and consultations to produce robust findings and conclusions. The key data collection methods include a desk review of program and other relevant secondary documents, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with project stakeholders and beneficiary groups and an online survey with beneficiaries. Inferences on the project are analytical rather than statistical. Conclusions are based on evidence and reasoning, drawing on different forms of evidence rather than statistical probability. The combination of a range of methods drawing on both subjective and objective methods provide a balanced and insightful approach to addressing the key evaluation questions and sub-questions.

The evaluation complies with evaluation norms and standards and was carried out in adherence with the relevant parts of the ILO evaluation policy and ILO evaluation strategy. The evaluation follows ethical safeguards, as specified in the ILO’s evaluation procedures.<sup>6</sup> Gender equality is addressed during the collection & analysis of information. The evaluation integrated a gender-responsive methodology, tools and data analysis including sex-disaggregated data.

Data collected in this study was from secondary and primary sources including a desk review of relevant documents included at Annex 5 which identified key issues to be investigated and probed through primary data collection. Consultations were then conducted with important project stakeholders. Due to travel restrictions, all interviews were conducted remotely. Mon and Karen translation was provided by the evaluation team. See Annex 3 for a list of stakeholders consulted.

In regard to sampling, for the delivery organisations, most of the key representatives involved in the project were canvassed. For village level beneficiaries, a sampling strategy was employed based on purposive sampling. Table 2 shows the numbers of respondents in different locations and for different stakeholder types (Also included in Annex 2).

**Table 2: Sampling of Beneficiaries of community infrastructure and employment (Component 1)**

	<b>Palaing Ja Pan Village, Three Pagoda</b>	<b>Phelan Village, Bee Ree Area,</b>	<b>Khwi Kava Village, Kyar Inn Seik Gyi,</b>	<b>Wae Zin/Dhama Parla Yabyu township, Danei</b>	<b>Total</b>

<sup>6</sup> The ILO adheres to the UN system of evaluation norms and standards as well as to the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards.

	Pass District, Karen State	Mon State	Karen State	District, Tanintharyi	
<b>Village Development Committee members</b>					
<b>Males</b>	16	5	19	8	48
<b>Female</b>	5	2	5	3	20
<b>Community Contractors</b>					
<b>Males</b>	5	3	6	7	21
<b>Females</b>	-	2	3	3	8
<b>Construction Workers</b>					
<b>Males</b>	2	5	5	7	19
<b>Females</b>	5	17	6	17	45

Participants were selected in a transparent process through wider consultations with the community, inclusivity was prioritized, including for vulnerable groups, with at least 40% of participants being women and men from different ethnic groups. PWD and youth were also represented. Due to a considerable time period (about 12 months) since cessation of TVET activities an impact assessment conducted by the ESP was relied upon for Component 2. For Component 2, four female and four male TVET trainees were interviewed at TPKSI and MVA.

As stated above, the evaluation included both qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative interviews based on semi structured interview guides were conducted with delivery organisations. For village level beneficiaries, qualitative FGDs based on semi structured interview guides were carried out. A quantitative online survey was also conducted with the village level beneficiaries, with the same respondents as participated in the FGDs. The survey was developed using Google Forms and delivered to beneficiaries online with translation into local languages.

After stakeholder consultations, an online validation workshop was held with the Project Steering Committee, the Project Implementation Team, the donor and ILO staff. Triangulation of project reports, qualitative and quantitative information from stakeholder consultations produced adequate evidence to reach findings on the evaluation questions as well as produce lessons learned and recommendations for moving forward. The entire review is grounded in a utilisation focused evaluation in that results and findings are presented in a way to maximize the ability of stakeholders to process, apply and learn from key findings and results.

### 3.6 Evaluation limitations

All evaluations and reviews have limitations in terms of time and resources. Some limitations pertaining to this evaluation are outlined below:

**Time constraints:** the rigour of the data gathering analysis was constrained to some degree by the time available. The final evaluation team were not be able to consult with all key stakeholders, particularly for follow-up meetings and discussions. The evaluator strengthened data collection by supporting qualitative data collection with a quantitative survey. The Consultant also relied on previous evaluations, impact assessments and reviews to support analysis.

**Online modality:** Due to travel restrictions to rural areas the evaluation team was not able to visit stakeholders but rather interviews were conducted online. This limited the capacity of the review team to verify project achievements such as the construction of community infrastructure. The evaluator triangulated information from several different sources such as project documents, project staff and village level stakeholders.

**Judgements:** the time limitations mean that professional judgements needed to be employed to interpret stakeholder perspectives. The evaluator’s ability to apply judgement was strengthened by her extensive experience as an evaluator including on a previous phase of this project.

**Attribution:** ILO works in a fluid and dynamic environment (particularly for skills development and institutional strengthening) and many factors influence performance and operational efficiency. Defining and identifying specific areas of attribution remain challenging at best. The development and application of the Evaluation Question Matrix (See Annex 4) helped to clarify attribution.

### 3.7 Ethical considerations

The evaluation adheres to the ILO’s Code of Conduct and the Australasian Evaluation Society’s (AES) Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations and to relevant ILO standards and guidelines outlined in the Terms of Reference (ToR) (e.g. M&E Standards).

The evaluation fully informed the interview and group discussion participants of the purpose of the review and how the information will be used, that their participation is voluntary and to seek their approval to participate. If a person being interviewed was uncomfortable or unwilling to answer any question, the evaluation did not pursue the line of questioning. Finally, the evaluation ensured the findings are discussed and presented in an accountable and transparent manner and ensured that all dealings with stakeholders are conducted in a professional and mutually respectful manner. Given the sensitivity of the context, all stakeholder groups were treated with integrity and respect for confidentiality. Respondents’ identities were protected and participation were made aware that their participation was entirely voluntary.

## 4 Key Findings and Analysis

The following section summarises key findings against the six evaluation criteria.

### 4.1 Relevance

This section looks at the extent to which the project is relevant to the needs and strategically a good idea in the operating context. In addressing this question, the evaluation questions provide guidance as to the issues that need to be considered including beneficiary needs and country needs, whether the project addressed the major causes of vulnerability, response to livelihood & employment issues among remittance-dependent communities. Specific questions under this criterion include:

- Is the project still relevant to beneficiaries', global, country, ILO and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, considering the changes in circumstances (the 2021 coup d'état)? What is the relevance of the project as perceived by the local population and beneficiaries?
- How has the project responded flexibly to changing circumstances over time? Did the project address the major causes of vulnerability and respond to livelihood & employment issues among remittance-dependent communities, including women and youth?
- Are the stated goals, objectives and outputs relevant to issues (and their effects) that are central to the situation of pandemic and ongoing conflict and fragility? Was there a measurable relationship between project outputs e.g. cash into communities, and project outcomes?
- To what extent did other interventions and policies support or undermine the project interventions, and vice versa?

#### 4.1.1 Relevance of the project to beneficiary needs

**The relevance of the LRB EIIP approach** to beneficiary needs can be seen in the strong appreciation of village beneficiaries of the opportunity to work together, to design and implement their own project, the infrastructure built as well as the opportunities for employment (workers) and contract and project implementation (contractors).

**The relevance of infrastructure** through the project addressed perceived needs of communities because community members selected the projects themselves. In all the consultations, villagers enthusiastically explained to the evaluator what infrastructure they had chosen and why:

*"We built a primary school" – the previous primary school was difficult to access during the rainy season so we built a new one difficult to access the school, rainy season: quite high: currents are not enough: so that's why they make another one. VDC member, Palaing Ja Pan Village, Three Pagoda Pass District, Karen State*

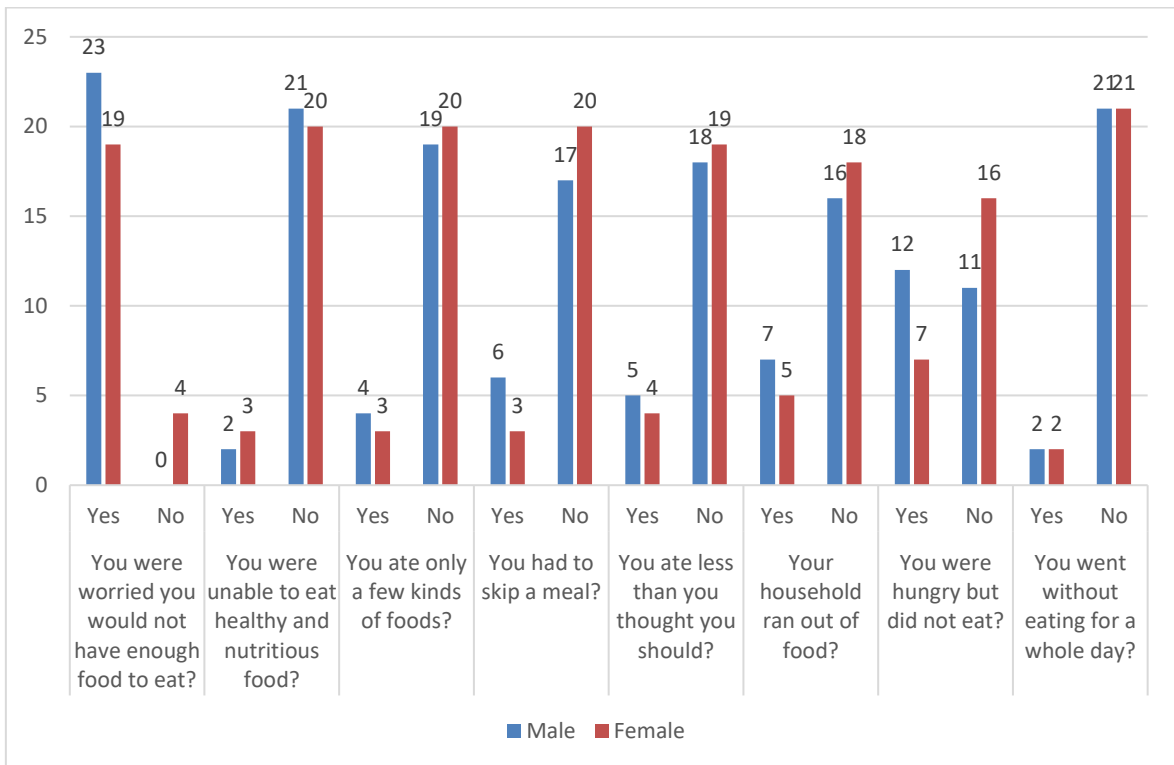
*"We built a reservoir and pipes from a water spring - before we got water from the river and often got sick, we also had to walk far to collect water, so we wanted to get better quality water that was easier to access". Worker, Phelan Village, Bee Ree Area, Mon State*



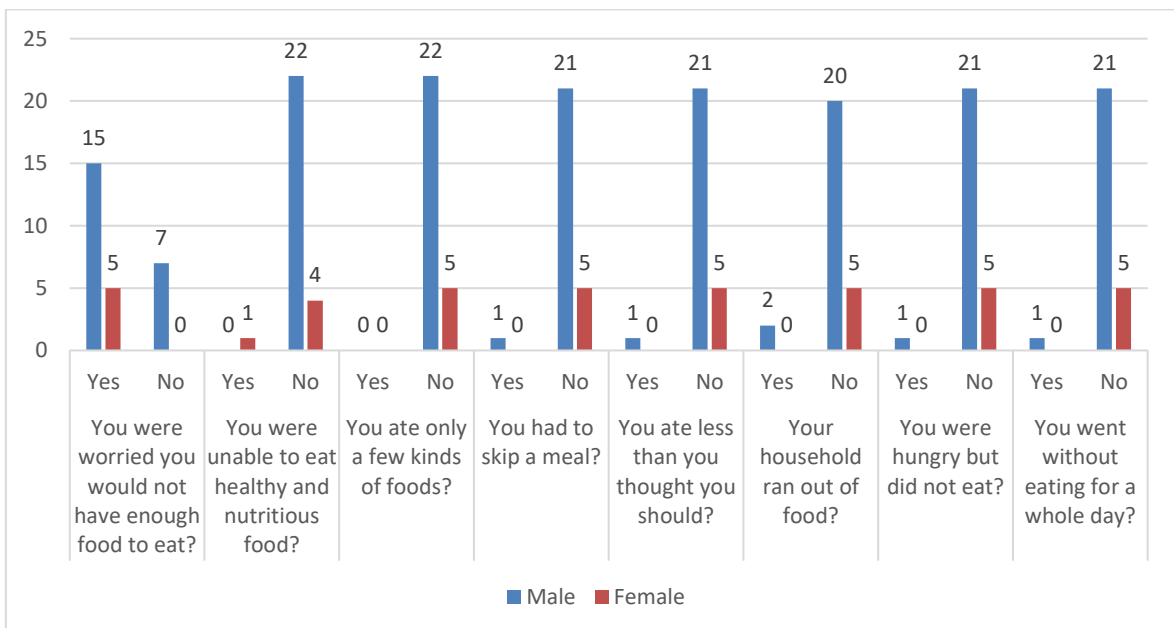
Due to the limited time and methodology of the evaluation, the Consultant was not able to probe deeply into the community planning process to see if there was any conflict between villagers in selecting projects but at all FDGs participants described infrastructure as “their” projects that they decided would be built. Further probing of intra village dynamics vis-à-vis the selection of community infrastructure projects could be achieved by engaging local researchers to conduct discussions with stakeholders in groups divided by socio-economic characteristics (age, sex, ethnicity etc). In each village interviewed, respondents including VDC members, contractors and workers clearly explained the processes and mechanisms for project selection, budget management, contractor selection and worker selection. One respondent mentioned that they rarely get the opportunity in Myanmar to adopt this kind of team approach and so strongly appreciated it. In a context where national and regional governance systems have largely broken down (notwithstanding that the NMSP is relatively organised and functional), village level governance increases in importance.

**Relevance of short-term employment.** The provision of employment addressed a relevant need within the community. Villagers informed the evaluation team that they had not experienced conflict within their villages. However, villagers in Three Pagoda Pass, Yee and Kyar In Seik Gyi there was conflict in areas nearby to the village. There were indications of food insecurity among beneficiaries. The Consultant conducted the FAO Food Insecurity Experience Scale questionnaire with village-based respondents. 100% of male workers, 82% of female workers, 68% of male contractors, 100% of female contractors, 72% of male VDC members and 94% of female VDC members said that during the last 12 months, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources they were worried that they would not have enough food to eat. 30% of male workers and 21% of female workers said that their household ran out of food. 21% of male workers said they had to skip a meal. 27% of male VDC members and 35% female said they had been unable to eat health and nutritious food. This suggests a deleterious national economic situation. Although data was not collected to compare the pre-pandemic pre-Coup food security status of villagers it suggests that it is likely that the Pandemic, the Coup and global pressures is affecting community members living in villages in Southeast Myanmar. The evidence showing the poor food security status of project participants also demonstrates the project targeted poor and vulnerable community members which highlights the relevance of the project.

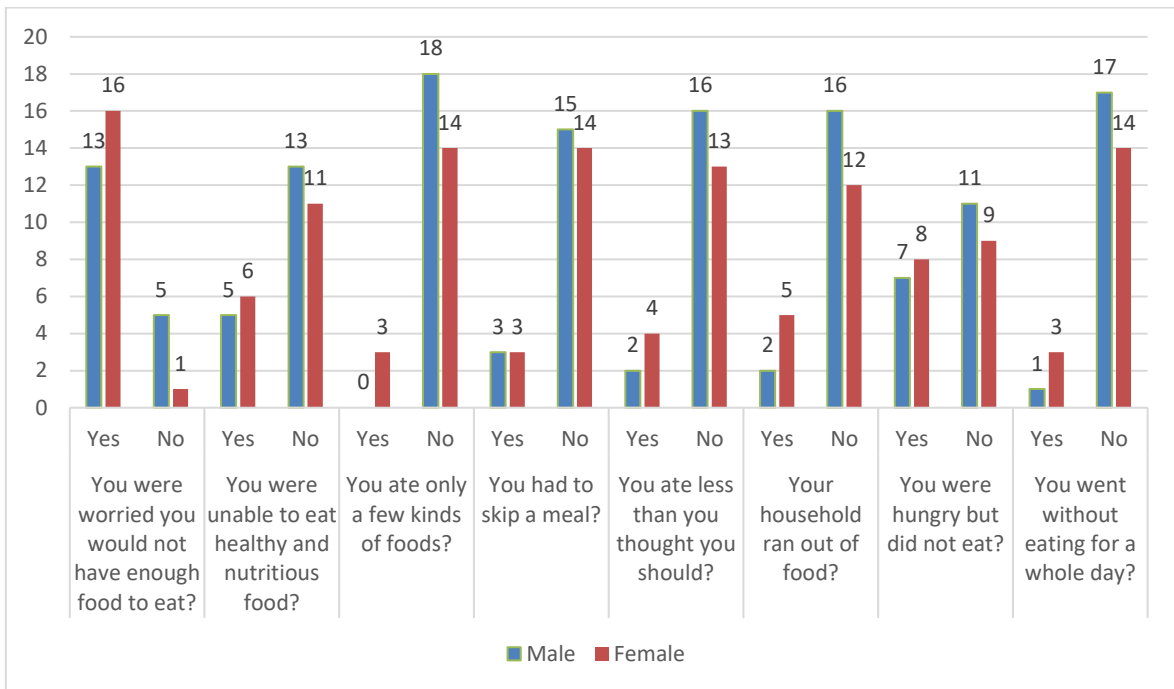
**Figure 2: During the last 12 months, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources - workers**



**Figure 3: During the last 12 months, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources - contractors**

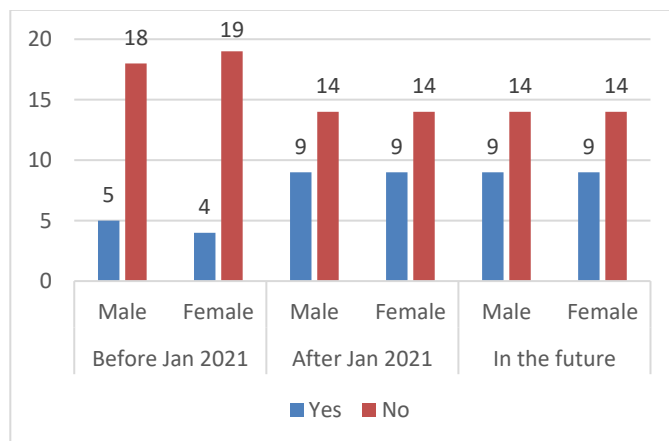


**Figure 4: During the last 12 months, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources - VDC Members**

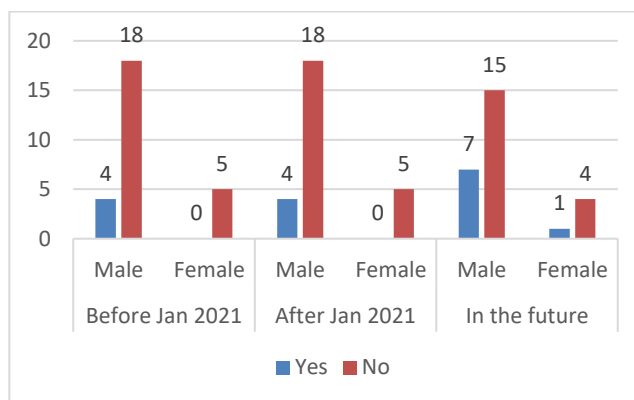


While the rationale for the project was offsetting livelihood downturns due to loss of remittances following border closures in response to COVID-19, evaluation respondents did not experience this. Figures 5,6 and 7 show that among workers, contractors and VDC members slightly more respondents had a household member working overseas after January 2021 by which time most expulsions from Thailand had taken place compared to before January 2021. Nevertheless, as long as safe migration is taking place it is positive to see that migration for work continued to take place during the Coup and Pandemic among evaluation respondents.

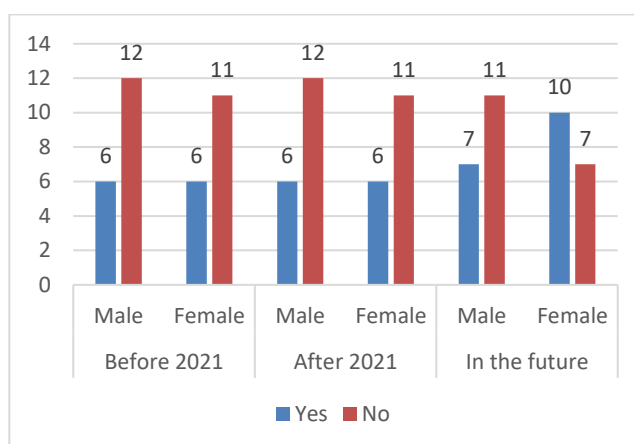
**Figure 5: Did you have a household member working overseas? - workers**



**Figure 6: Did you have a household member working overseas? - contractors**

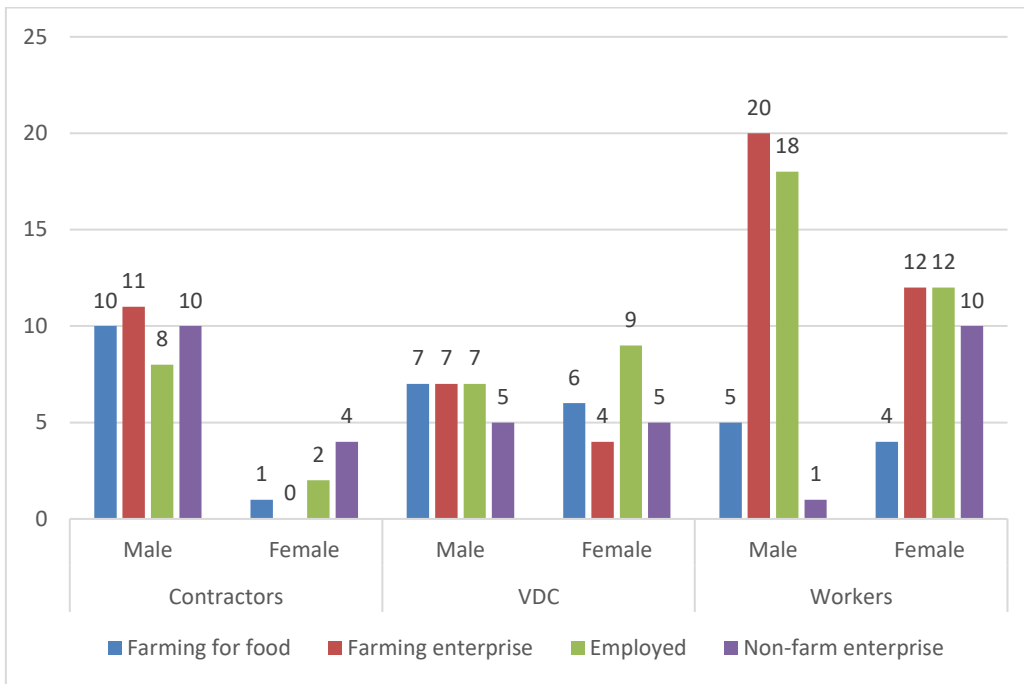


**Figure 7: Did you have a household member working overseas? - VDCs**

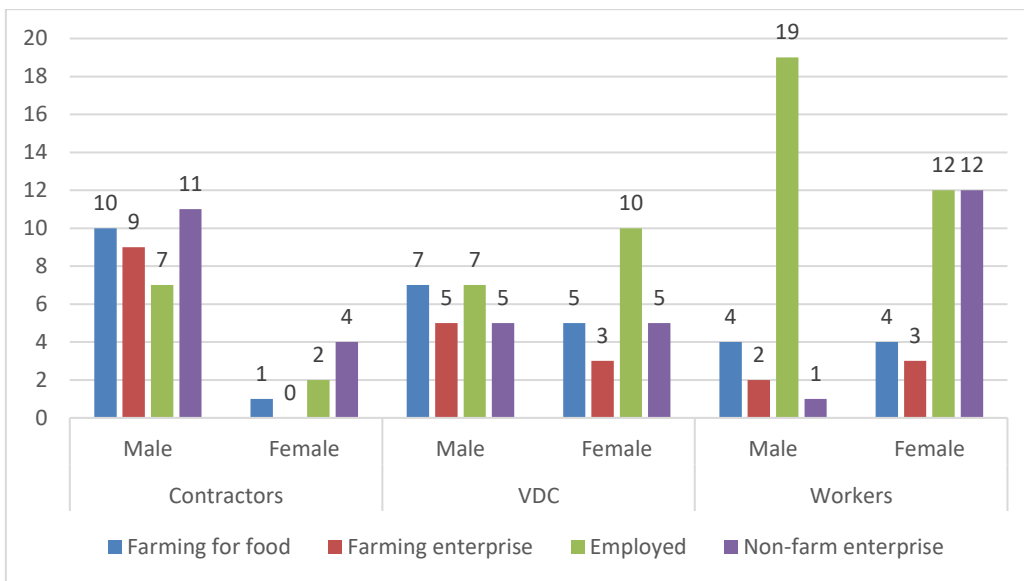


However, the evaluation did find that among respondents there was a loss of livelihoods due to recent changing circumstances. Over the last 12 months the percentage of male workers whose livelihood activities included farm enterprises went from 46% to 0.5% and female workers went from 26% to 0.6%. Moreover, Figure 10 shows that in the future, plans to increase engagement in farming enterprises are not evident among respondents. During evaluation consultations, village-based respondents mentioned that they had trouble bringing their produce to markets in towns and cities because of conflict in surrounding areas and restrictions on movement that were imposed by EAOs. This situation leaves little scope for strengthening livelihoods through value chain approaches increasing the importance of employment as a form of economic diversification of livelihoods and therefore skills development. The evaluation survey showed that non-farm microbusinesses are important livelihood strategies, particularly for women, especially among workers (see Figures 8 and 9). The need for employment or non-farm micro enterprises is even greater for those residents that don't own land. In times of economic downturn, landowners can potentially fulfil their food security needs through subsistence activities. Non landowners do not have this option but must continue to rely on employment/micro-enterprises. Among survey respondents, 53% of males and 46% of female respondents said they own land. Landownership was particularly low among workers: 65% of male workers and 60% of female workers said they did not own land (See Figure 11).

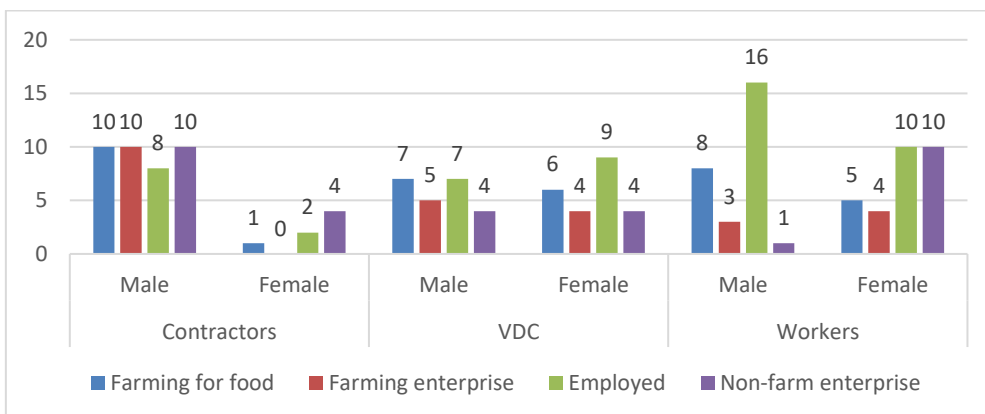
**Figure 8: Respondents' livelihood activities 12 months ago (from March 2023)**



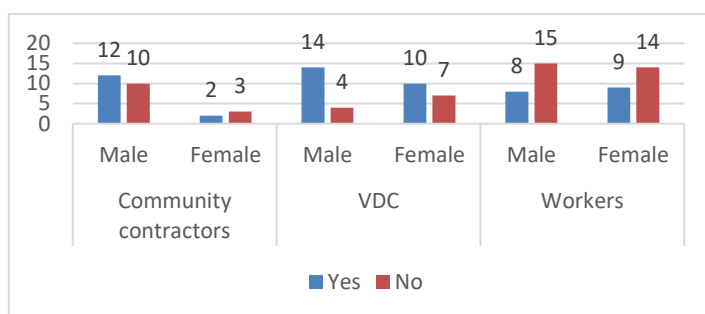
**Figure 9: Respondents' livelihood activities at the current time (March 2023)**



**Figure 10: Respondents' planned livelihood activities in 12 months-time (from March 2023)**



**Figure 11: Do you own land?**



**Relevance of TVET training.** In addition to employment days as a cash injection into households, Another way in which the project supports employment and micro-enterprises is through TVET training which gives individuals skills and qualifications to improve their prospects. Notably, the evaluation of the previous EIP project recommended implementing TVET training so it is positive to see the ILO adopt this recommendation. TVET training was provided in three ways on the project including (i) skills training prior to employment on village infrastructure construction projects (ii) TVET training provided by CSO training centres and (iii) village based TVET training. The details of the training provided are outlined under Section 4.5: Effectiveness.

There are several reasons why TVET training is relevant to the needs of beneficiaries. The first is the current limitations to agriculture-based livelihood enhancement strategies explained above. Second, with villages somewhat isolated from main towns due to conflict, curfews, roadblocks etc there is greater need for services to be available in villages. During consultations, when asked about their needs for support, moving forward, the main focus of their requests was further TVET training with requests for hair cutting, skincare and beauty, sewing, soapmaking, carpentry, motorbike mechanics, repairing electronic devices and generators. It is important, however, that there is some concept of “workforce planning” in villages so that the right number of individuals are trained in particular skills so as to meet market demand.

**Consistency with ILO, donor and partner agency priorities and policy frameworks.** Myanmar is stuck in an intractable conflict crisis with no resolution in sight. The multisided political conflict which has left aid agencies hamstrung, involves several fault lines:

- **Between the NLD and the State Administration Council (SAC)** The legitimately elected NLD Administration gives no recognition to the Military occupation leaving many societal functions unstable without legal underpinning.
- **Between the UN and civil society organisations.** Development partners, including the UN, have refused to recognise the occupation but for practical reasons have begun to engage. Allegedly, OCHA, UNICEF, FAO and IOM signed new agreements and presented credentials to the Junta in August and September 2022.<sup>7</sup> In response, 638 CSOs wrote a letter to the UN condemning these agreements.
- **Between the NLD/Burmese and EAOs.** Prior to the coup there was conflict between the NLD Administration and the EAO. In 2015, half rejected signing a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) while the other half signed. The partnership of UN agencies with the NLD administration has prevented them from collaborating extensively with the EAOs and precluded their access to vast areas of the country.<sup>8,9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> <https://aseanmp.org/2022/09/23/letter-to-the-un-secretary-general-on-un-agencies-engagement-with-the-myanmar-junta/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.iseas.edu.sg/articles-commentaries/iseas-perspective/2021-79-ethnic-armed-organisations-in-post-coup-myanmar-new-conversations-needed-by-andrew-ong/>

<sup>9</sup>

In this situation policy frameworks for the project have been unclear and hard to operationalise. The project is relevant to the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and its nexus between humanitarian and development planning for conflict-affected vulnerable rural communities in Southeast Myanmar. Additionally, the project is well-aligned with the priorities laid out in the UN Strategic Emergency and Rehabilitation Response Plan (UN SERRP), which constitutes the fundamental document that outlines the general framework for the engagement of the UN Country Team (UNCT) in Myanmar, given the absence of a signed Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. Upon the conclusion of the UN SERRP, the upcoming UN Transitional Cooperation Framework (TCF) planned to be established in 2023 and put into operation in 2024, the project is also compatible with it.

From the ILO side, the project aligns with the ILO Myanmar Decent Work Country Programme. The project contributed towards Priority 2: *By 2021, employment and decent work and sustainable entrepreneurship opportunities are available and accessible to all, including for vulnerable populations affected by conflict and disasters*. Notably the project contributed towards:

- Outcome 2.1: More women and men of working age have decent jobs or are engaged in entrepreneurship, especially those in vulnerable employment conditions – by providing employment and injecting funds into the local economy with flow on effects for local investment and established business functionality and networks (e.g. local contractors)
- Outcome 2.2: Strengthened protection against vulnerable forms of work, in particular forced labour and child labour, through the production and distribution of IEC materials and workshops.<sup>10</sup>

However, the DWCP expired in 2022 and without a clear legitimate government enabling genuine tripartite engagement, it cannot be renewed.

At the current time, the dominating policy frameworks of the UN and donors, including the current and potential donor, the New Zealand Government, focus on humanitarian support. In the context of the Pandemic, the donor prioritised a rapid response to get assistance on the ground over ensuring activities were underpinned by a consistent, coherent policy framework and strategy. However, moving forward the donor will require a clearer “theory of change” to frame the project design and longer term thinking beyond immediate response. It seems appropriate that a framework of “resilience” is applied to a context involving challenges of both humanitarian need as well as longer term development. Such an approach allows for building on the foundations of what’s working for communities as well as supporting those who are in desperate need.

***Does the project address major causes of vulnerability?*** The evaluation team views the approach involving short term employment, strengthening community management systems, building community infrastructure and practical skills for employment and small business the project has helped to be relevant to the livelihood constraints imposed by the complex crisis. Notably the project strategies are not specifically designed to support Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who lack shelter, services and livelihoods, although there are IDPs among target communities. According to the UN, an estimated 1,704,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) were reported across the country as of 6 March 2023, including 1,376,000 people newly displaced since February 2021 and estimated refugee movements to India and Thailand since Feb 2021 reached 72,000. Latest figures suggest that **17.5 million people require humanitarian aid in 2023, compared with 1 million** before the takeover.

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<sup>10</sup> ILO Myanmar Decent Work Country Programme

During consultations, the donor mentioned that should they continue to support the ILO, a) they would like to see their support go to the most vulnerable in conflict zones and b) infrastructure may not be ideal for a conflict zone since it can be destroyed.

However, IDPs have been difficult for agencies to access. The military actively seeks to prevent assistance reaching communities with its “Four Cuts” policy of preventing food, medicine, fuel and information to reaching territories that are regarded as supporting the resistance. According to UN estimates, by December 2022 a mere 426,000 people in need had been reached with CRI/Shelter support by UNHCR and 72,000 people have crossed into neighbouring countries.

Furthermore, the ILO is not a humanitarian agency and is not equipped to operate in conflict zones. The project had to discontinue planned activities in Karen State due to conflict and the important underpinning principle of “Do No Harm” which means that project activities cannot put staff, partners or community members who need to travel to markets to purchase construction materials, at risk. Many project activities were conducted online but project engineers still need to travel to project locations. In conflict zones, project activities could also put CSO staff at risk.

**Relevance of project partnerships.** In implementing the project, the ILO has been operational and achieved outputs and outcomes where other developments have been unable to develop a presence. This has been facilitated by the operational focus of the project on simple construction activities and partnerships at the local level.

**Partnerships with EAOs especially NMSP.** The project worked closely with EAOs, particularly the NMSP with representatives of the Party and its technical departments the Mon National Education Committee (MEC) and the Mon National Health Committee (MHC) on the project Steering Committee. The presence of the party and its departments on the PSC helps to ensure the provision of materials, equipment and staff for health and education facilities built through the project. The ILO’s partnership with the NSMP builds on collaboration on a past EIIP in Mon State. The ILO is moving forward supporting governance and service delivery of the EAOs although their constitutional status is unclear. Should a new phase be approved by the donor, the ILO aims to collaborate closely with EAOs on matters related to good governance, as it presents an opportunity to enhance and/or showcase their capabilities and gain valuable experience in this area (management) .

This strategy is to the benefit of community members in EAO areas as the EAOs are the only administrations that have any capacity to deliver services with the NLD overthrown and the SAC focused on using violence to consolidating control. However, the NMSP is one of the more organised, capable and well established as an administration implying that this approach may be more challenging to implement in other EAO areas.

There may be risks associated with being seen to be aligned with a rebel organisation but advising on political matters is beyond the scope of this evaluation. It is worth noting that Burmese, CSOs and the PDF that previously saw the EAOs as a threat to the indivisibility of the Union have began looking hopefully to the EAOs to come together to fight the regime and are looking more favourably on their goals of federalism. If the resolution of the conflict ultimately led to federalism, the ILO approach would look fortuitous. The views of potential donors on this matter are important for the ILO to consider in the way it frames its strategy.

**Partnering with CSOs.** The projects partnership with CSOs including CDI and TPKSI and MVA is relevant to the ILOs engagement in Myanmar given the important role that CSOs are playing in channelling the will of the people and resistance against the illegitimate occupation. The selection on the effectiveness of the specific NGOs is addressed under Section 4.3: Effectiveness It’s important to seek, strengthen and maintain collaboration with CSOs as a strategy to operate in hard to access areas. However, CSOs are also under threat from the SAC who is refusing to renew the registration of CSOs who oppose them with severe penalties including jail terms for those that



continue to operate without registration. It was due to lapsing of registration that the project had to discontinue its collaboration with the Karen based ESP. Over the next year the registration of CDI will come up in the next year. NZL have indicated that they do not require registration for cooperation with an CDI. But working without registration could put CSO staff in danger. The ILO will need to take careful consideration in approaching this issue.

## 4.2 Coherence

The criterion of coherence looks at whether the project coordinated well with other initiatives in the area. The evaluation questions pertaining to this criterion include:

- Was the project consistent with or influential to ILO national, regional and global strategic priorities and programming on labour migration, social protection and skills development, and make effective use of its comparative advantages?
- To what extent there is synergies and interlinkages between the project interventions and other interventions carried out by the ILO-Yangon office, the government, EAOs, ESPs, CSOs and social partners?  
How the project adds value in relation to others and how duplication of effort is avoided?

Coherence was challenging to achieve on the project due to the forced occupation by coup-de-ta of the *Tatmadaw* and other compounding crises such as COVID-19 and the Ukraine War. Under the circumstances the ILO capitalised well on its comparative advantage to achieve outcomes on the ground.

The military takeover and global situation has put UN Agencies including the ILO in a bind on several fronts as explained under Section 4.1: Relevance. On the ILO side, the supportive policy settings have also been diminished by the complex emergency. Institutional policy frameworks on labour migration, social protection and skills development<sup>11</sup> were designed more to fit a development than humanitarian context. The Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) expired in 2022 and has not been renewed. A previous MoU exists to facilitate some programming but other factors have also been affecting the ILO program in Myanmar. International visas have been revoked. Other projects have discontinued or are operating on a holding pattern. The OSH project and the SME Support program have ended. The project combating forced labour remains ongoing, with a new phase currently being negotiated.

In conflict-affected community under the EAOs controlled areas, a majority of projects and programmes have concentrated on supplying humanitarian aid rather than promoting economic relief and recovery. At present ILO's Myanmar Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour is ongoing in areas in NMSP controlled areas in Mon State. Other than that there was little other donor activity in the vicinity for the project to coordinate with. In Southeast Myanmar, there are no ongoing or planned activities by other projects or development partners that are similar to those that have been implemented in the past, so there is no risk of duplication. The ILO is the only development agency in the area that has carried out cash for work through employment-intensive public works programmes.

## 4.3 Efficiency of resource use

This section looks at how the project used resources. Specifically, this section addresses the following questions:

- Given the size of the project, its complexity and challenges under Covid-19 as well as the political instability in Myanmar, have the existing management structure and technical capacity been sufficient and adequate?
- To what extent the project received political support to navigate local political and security challenges?
- Has the project been receiving adequate political, technical and administrative support from the ILO and its partners? If not, why? How did the project address this?

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<sup>11</sup> Eg the ILO Migration for Employment Convention (No 97) and the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention (No 143), the ILO Multilateral Framework for Labour Migration, the ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation (No 202), the ILO Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention (No 102), the ILO Skills for Employment and Productivity Recommendation (No 195), the ILO Skills Development Convention (No 142)

- Was the project’s use of resources optimal for achieving its intended results (financial, human, institutional and technical, etc.)?
- Were activities completed on-time/according to work plans? Was the funding and timeframe sufficient to achieve the intended outcomes?
- Which project activities represented the greatest value for money in terms of achieving objectives and outputs of the project?
- Were cost-sharing arrangements or in-kind contributions sought from partners to complement the project’s resources (from other ILO projects, inter-agency initiatives, cooperation with tripartite constituents and CSO partners, etc.)? Which were the most effective for leveraging project resources?

**Management arrangements** on the project were well defined and involved the coordination of a range of stakeholders (See Figure 1). The strength of these arrangements in terms of promoting technical efficacy and community ownership is verified by the strong support of the EAO and local communities to facilitate the project to go ahead, in spite of the big challenges. The project also received strong political support from the ILO Yangon office. Their flexibility and conflict sensitivity also played an important role in enabling the project to go ahead and the results to be achieved. However, the technical backstopping from other ILO offices was minimal in contrast to the previous project which received extensive expert inputs on engineering, economic and resource generation matters from the ROAP Office in Bangkok. Correspondingly the project had a very operational orientation with minimal elaboration linking project activities with a theory of change or national or longer-term strategies.

**Regarding efficiency**, the evaluation team found that there were aspects of the approach that were efficient, e.g. drawing on community level human resources for delivery of outputs but the delay in implementation caused inefficiencies. Table 3 shows the project budget and expenditure amount at the end of the project. The project managed to complete planned outputs and expend most of the funds by the end of the project timeframe, although a 12 month no cost extension was provided, despite the delays to commencement of the project. There was some reallocation of line items in accordance with implementation requirements.

**Table 3: Project budget and expenditure (\$USD)**

	Total Budget	Total Expenditure	Percentage of budget spent at end of project
ILO National staff	141,010	173,963	123%
ILO International staff	400,350	425,182	106%
Travel costs ILO Staff	16,500	0	0%
Security	18,764	17,942	95%
Evaluation Study	15,000	20,000	133%
Operational expenses & Communications	18,000	21,899	122%
Construction works – ESP Subcontract	53,734	139,733	260%
TVET Training Sub-contract	264,011	244,700	92%

	Total Budget	Total Expenditure	Percentage of budget spent at end of project
Infrastructure Cost – Sub-contract	957,034	834,559	87%
Provision for cost increase (PCI)	8,643	13,388	155%
Program Support Cost (13% of BL 13)	120,558	135,624.	1.13
UN Levy Cost (1% of BL 14+15+16+17)	20,136	20,136	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,033,740</b>	<b>2,033,740</b>	<b>100%</b>

The total funds contributed to community infrastructure was USD 974,292 plus USD 13,388 provision for cost increase. This is 48.5% of the total cost compared to 19% for the previous RBSA project. The budget for TVET training, at USD 244,700 was 12% of the total budget. This implies that total funds spent at the community level was 60.5%, much higher than the 25% spent at community level on the previous project. There were some aspects of implementation that were efficient in terms of achieving greater benefit for less cost including:

- The use of community contractors is cheaper than commercial contractors (less cost) and the funds flow into the local economy (more benefit)
- The local community are employed as workers for the infrastructure enabling funds to flow into the local economy (more benefit)
- There was only one international staff member
- There were no travel costs
- Trainers, supplied by CSOs, were not expensive (less cost)

Notably, there were (some inefficiencies) delays in project commencement which could be said to have caused inefficiencies as ILO international staff and national staff salaries were paid for several months which while project activities were not yet taking place. However, such delays were arguably unavoidable due to coup related security issues, banking challenges and the need to better comprehend a rapidly changing operational context. The value of money for TVET training is also questionable with the cost of each TVET student at NZD 1,200 per student IF the equipment and courses are not used for future training. Hopefully they will be. This should be clarified. Also, the project incurred an extra cost of security. No cost sharing was garnered from stakeholders.

#### 4.4 Effectiveness

While the criterion of relevance relates to whether the project made sense and was a good idea, the criterion of effectiveness relates to whether the project was implemented in an effective manner. Specifically, this section looks at:

- How did the project respond to the changing context? Was this done in such a way safety could be maintained and results could be delivered?
- To what extent did the project achieve the targets set forth in its logical diagram and results framework and to what extent were there deviations?
- What factors such as management, human resources and financial aspects affected the project's achievement of its planned targets?
- Has an effective Risk Analysis and M&E Reporting System been established and has it included disaggregated data by sex, age and disability?

- How effective was communication between different partners on the project such as project staff, the donor, the EAOs, CSO partners and beneficiaries?

***The effect of the changing circumstances on progress and the project response*** The two-pronged shock of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the Coup affected the project in several ways. Table 4 shows the challenge brought by the changing circumstances and the project team’s response. Overall, the challenges resulted in a delay (1 year) to the completion of project outputs and minor reductions in some project results. However, the project still managed to achieve most of results targets. The fact that it was due to the dedication of the project manager and the project implementation team, constant support from partners EAOs and CBOs and flexibility and conflict sensitivity of the ILO Office.

**Table 4: Challenges brought by changing circumstances and project response**

Challenge	Project response
Travel restrictions due to Covid-19 lockdowns, martial law and conflict in some areas made travel dangerous. Even after travel restrictions were lifted staff were reluctant to travel. International staff could not get visas.	Teleworking was introduced. The international project manager worked from his home country (Nepal). Staff travel to project sites was reduced and the project relied more on partner staff. PIT staff, particularly project engineers did travel to project locations, which required traveling through many roadblocks. A contingency plan was developed for a mobile training centre in case students could not travel to TVET centres.
The planned collaboration with the Kah Law Foundation (KLF) and the construction of project infrastructure in some locations in Kayin state became a threat to safety of the KLF and project staff. The KLF was in the line of sight of the SAC and some locations were under attack.	In line with the Do Harm Principle the project scaled down and eventually discontinued collaboration with the KLF and shifted focus on non-Government controlled areas.
Increases in commodity prices caused increases in the price of construction for community contractors caused constraints on the purchase of all required quantities of construction materials and transport for community contractors.	Construction contracts were revised to reflect the increase in prices. Contingency funds for price changes were added to the budget.
The Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) issued a directive restricting cash withdrawals countrywide including UN Agencies. This constrained the ability of the project to make transfers as the frozen primary bank account was frozen. Many state bank workers also didn’t show up for work in protest leading to bank closures	The project team requested the assistance of the ILO Bangkok Office to make regular payments to an overseas bank account of the ESP and then receive funds through a remittance service providers

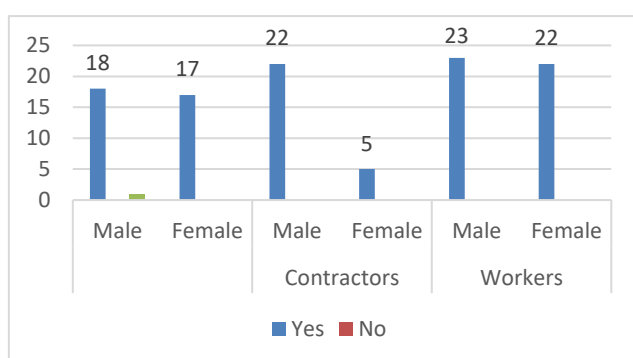
The DWCP was not extended in 2022	The Office can continue to operate in Myanmar with the original MOU signed in 2002 to establish the Liaison Office.
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#### 4.4.1 Achievement of results

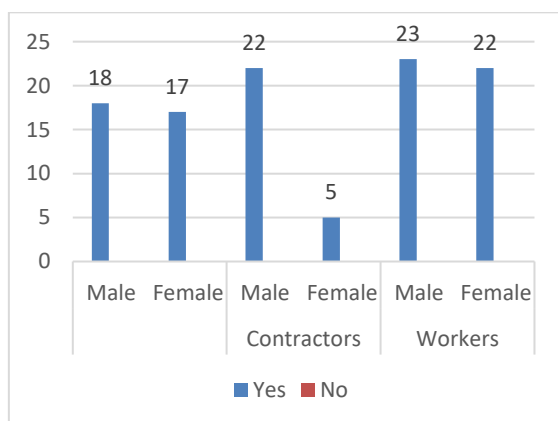
The project results were achieved with some revisions and a year-long no cost extension, despite significant challenges to implementation, stemming from the changing context of the pandemic and the coup.

According to findings from the evaluation survey, the project performed well in terms of the outcome indicators which can be seen in the results table. The project exceeded its targets for outcome indicators of 75% of all respondents at village level perceiving the ILO's interventions useful for the community as a whole (See Figure 12) and 75% of respondents are satisfied with the process of selection of individual projects (See Figure 13).

**Figure 12: Overall do you consider the ILO's interventions useful for the community as a whole?**



**Figure 13: Overall, were you satisfied with the process of selection of individual projects?**



**Output level results.** Table 5 shows the project results compared to original and revised targets. Overall, there were slightly less infrastructure built than targeted, slightly less workdays, slightly less funds that went to the villages, fewer community contractors and slightly less profit for the community contractors. The reasons for the differences However, the number of households benefiting from short term employment, the number of beneficiaries receiving TVET training and the number of villages targeted were higher than the original targets. Tables 6 and 7 also provide some more detail about the project results including the number and type of infrastructure, number of workers and number of TVET trainees.

**Table 5: Results against project indicators**

Output 1 indicators	Original target		Revised target		Results		Reason for differences between targets and results
Number of infrastructure assets constructed or improved on time, within budget and as per design specifications	Not less than 70 infrastructure assets		Not less than 55 infrastructure assets		56 Infrastructure assets		Political upheaval and the economic crisis that followed the Feb 2021 Coup, along with COVID-19 cases among ILO staff, implementation partners, and Mon and Karen ethnic communities, have severely limited the project's capacity to carry out its activities. As a result, the project had to pause its activities on multiple occasions and was compelled to accept a no-cost extension with revised targets.
Number of workdays of short-term employment provided across the targeted villages	About 25,200 workdays for females	About 30,800 work days for males	About 21,150 work days for females	About 25,850 work days for males	25,707 work days for females	26,398 work days for males	(SAME AS ABOVE) Political upheaval and the economic crisis that followed the Feb 2021 Coup, along with COVID-19 cases among ILO staff, implementation partners, and Mon and Karen ethnic communities, have severely limited the project's capacity to carry out its activities. As a result, the project had to pause its activities on multiple occasions and was compelled to accept a no-cost extension with revised targets.
Number of poor vulnerable households benefit from the short-term employment	At least 1,100 poor vulnerable households		At least 1,000 poor vulnerable households		At least 1,300 poor vulnerable households		Following the military coup in Myanmar, there has been a significant increase in the number of poor and vulnerable people in the EAOs controlled areas including project targeted areas. This is due to several reasons, including the disruption of the economy and livelihoods caused by the political instability, as well as the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the country's already fragile healthcare system. Additionally, the ongoing violence and conflict in southeast Myanmar have forced many people to flee their income and job losses and further exacerbating the humanitarian crisis. The combination of these factors has left many people in the EAO's controlled areas without access to basic necessities making them more susceptible to poverty and vulnerability.

Output 1 indicators	Original target		Revised target		Results		Reason for differences between targets and results
Amount of cash injections in the villages through cash-for work activities	Not less than NZD 1470000		Not less than NZD 1200000		Not less than NZD 1,033,000		The Coup and ensuing political unrest significantly disrupted the country's economy, causing the Myanmar Kyat to lose value and a rise of inflation. Currency devaluation and fluctuation had a severe effect on the project's financial resources, which were kept in a variety of currencies, including NZ, US, Thai, and Kyat dollars. difficulty in effectively forecasting and managing the project budget.
Established and operational Village Infrastructure Operation and Maintenance Committees (VIOMCs) in each targeted village	Over 30 villages		Unchanged		48 VIOMCs established		
Number of beneficiaries from among the most affected poor and vulnerable households in participating villagers have successfully completed certified short TVET courses	81 female beneficiaries	99 male beneficiaries	126 female beneficiaries	71 male beneficiaries	126 female beneficiaries	71 male beneficiaries	
% of trainees who completed the TVET courses, will receive on-the-job training in the project's infrastructure construction	At least 50%		Unchanged		100%		
% of beneficiaries who have successfully completed the certified TVET courses, have secured or have been assured job placement	Not less than 50%		Unchanged		50%		



Output 1 indicators	Original target	Revised target	Results	Reason for differences between targets and results
Number of community contractors from participating villages have received training on construction and contract management aspects and have all completed the works in time, in budget and as per specification.	Not less than 70 community contractors	Not less than 55 community contractors	56 community contractors	The reduction in the number of infrastructure project have resulted in a corresponding decrease in this target
Amount of profit each community contractors have earned	Profit in the range of NZD 2,000 to NZD 3,000 each	Unchanged	NZD 1700	
All VDCs have received training required to exercise their roles and responsibilities.	30 villages	48 villages	48 villages	

**Table 6: Infrastructure type, number and number of beneficiary households and individuals**

Infrastructure	Number	HHs	Beneficiaries Male	Beneficiaries Female	Total Beneficiaries
Wash	14	1931	3133	3390	6,523
School	25	3297	6371	6899	13,270
Clinic	4	533	995	1077	2,072
Road Improvement	8	1159	3065	3306	6,371
Footbridges	5	506	1095	1177	2,272
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>7426</b>	<b>14,659</b>	<b>15,849</b>	<b>30,508</b>

**Table 7: Number of community contractors, workers and VDC members on the project**

Area Name	Community Contractors			Workers			VDC Members		
	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F
Kyar Inn Seik Gyi	15	14	1	330	191	139	105	60	45
Three Pagoda Pass	13	8	2	245	157	91	42	34	76
Bee Ree Area	15	12	3	431	157	274	92	48	44
Dawei District	13	9	4	351	143	208	63	33	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1357</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>712</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>153</b>
Percentage		77%	18%		48%	52%		54%	44%

**Factors affecting achievement of results** The application of procedures to ensure transparency of decisions and fair payment and conditions helped to increase trust and collaboration at community level. The selection of infrastructure projects took place through a clear, transparent and comprehensively consultative process involving several steps as follows:

#### *Public consultations*

The project has developed a comprehensive Project Operational Procedure Manual, which also outlines when various public consultations should be held at the village level to ensure inclusive participation and knowledge of the activities. Once a rural infrastructure is identified through the community consultation, the public hearing meeting was carried out to inform about the project cost, roles of VDCs, Contractors and the project staff, workers' rights, to get the consensus on implementation period, availability of workers, etc. in January. The meetings were held in the presence of villagers, local EAO authorities and leaders, CBOs, service providers-teachers, medics.

#### *Engineering design and an estimate of the infrastructure*

The project developed in close consultation with the VDCs and communities the design of 15 different infrastructures: improvement and construction of school buildings, health centres, and WASH facilities. At least two VDCs meetings were conducted to identify and verification of the engineering designs. For calculation of the construction materials, transportation, tools, and equipment costs, at least three quotations from the local suppliers were collected.

#### *Waged determination:*

In each targeted village, the project staff consulted with VDCs, artesian, and community to determine the wages of the unskilled, semi-skilled, and skilled workers, and the proposed wages are

between MMK 9,000, MMK 13,000, and MMK 18,000 respectively, according to local practices. The number of workers was determined in close consultation with skilled workers.

**Component 2 Results** Under Component 2, TVET training was delivered in collaboration with the CSO Covenant Development Institute. The approach taken to the design and implementation of the TVET courses, in collaboration with two local TVET providers, TKPSI and MVA, was comprehensive and thorough:

- Initially, a skills gap assessment survey focused on assessing demand for skills training, assessing market opportunities, assessing current skill levels, assessing the availability of skills training already available in the community. This helped the providers to design, curriculum, and implementation of inclusive training. Survey participants included youth who had dropped out of school after grade 9, students studying at Government and Mission universities, and local villagers with an understanding of the local job market and TVET alumni.
- Equipment was purchased for MVA and TKPSI and trainers were recruited and trained
- A call for applications was carried out. Potential applicants were found from targeted local marketing, through the use of local community and religious leaders. Interviews were then conducted to select the beneficiaries most appropriate to participate in the training and who also best met the beneficiary criteria. A total of 325 applications were received by the two training sites, the MVA and TKPIS run Community Vocational Training Center (CVTC).
- TVET courses were delivered covering courses of varying duration covering topics of sewing, cooking, engine repair including motorcycle repair, small engines, hand saw and grass cutting machinery
- All trainees received life skill training including business skills. The life skills training included topics of income management, teamwork, business start-up, leadership, teamwork, personal management, good health, and human rights. Both MVA and TKPSI conducted life skills training online for the first batch during times when physically meeting was inappropriate due to Covid-19 cases surged or security situations. Many trainees therefore also learned how to use Zoom.
- Monthly reporting to the ILO was provided. A mid-term evaluation and impact assessment was conducted by CDI in order to collect lessons learned for future training.

A total of 219 applicants were selected and started the training. 19 dropped out resulting in 200 graduates. The 19 drop-outs included 12 from MVA and 7 from TKPSI. Nearly all of the drop out cases, 18 out of 19, occurred during the first batch of training in July. At the time there were both challenges with a severe Covid-19 wave and security issues in proximity to the training centres which led to training being suspended and the non-return of some participants.

**Table 8: Number of TVET graduates**

Course	Male	Female	Total
Carpentry	10	0	10
Cooking & bakery	3	25	28
Masonry	18	0	18
Mechanic	57	0	57
Sewing	0	64	64
Weaving	0	23	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>200</b>

The total number of graduates is 200 including 89 (44%) males and 111 females (56%) with an average age of 20 years and 3 months. Table 8 shows the distribution of trainees among the

different courses. 64 of the beneficiaries were trained at the MVA and 136 at TKPSI. Beneficiaries were from 3 Regions, 8 Townships, and 60 Villages. There were 7 (3.5%) participants from quarters of the urban areas of Dawei or Myeik; all other beneficiaries were from villages and can be considered rural. Most beneficiaries had completed schooling up to grade 10 or 11 with 5 cases of trainees with education to a degree level and 5 cases of trainees who never attended school. In June 2022, after cessation of the training, the CDI conducted a TVET impact assessment including a satisfaction survey.

TVET training was linked with ASEAN Qualifications Frameworks for TPSKI training but not for MVA. There is a national framework for the certification of technical training but it is not operational at the moment.

**Monitoring and evaluation systems** Monitoring and evaluation on the project were detailed and thorough and well disaggregated for gender and social inclusion except for some beneficiary data from the TVET impact assessment. Some impact level indicators were covered, such as employment and small business take up by TVET graduates. However, the link between project outputs and higher-level socio-economic outcomes was not extensively articulated through the M&E System. In the previous RBSA project a baseline and endline study was conducted. This was able to show changes in income level among beneficiaries, helping to understand the impact of the project. However, no baseline and endline data was collected on this project due to COVID-19 restrictions which made it unfeasible to conduct a baseline survey. Under the circumstances this made sense given Successive LRB projects in the Southeast have been based on short term project funding and there currently isn't a narrative anywhere about the long-term effects of the engagement on issues such as infrastructure maintenance, EAO administrative capacity, level community empowerment and local economies. The previous RBSA project had the support of a Technical Backstopping Specialist in Bangkok who provided inputs on technical engineering matters, strategic direction and resource raising. However, the current project has had minimal technical support from Bangkok. The highest-level staff member has been a project member and the focus of the project has been 100% operational. This is discussed in more detail under efficiency: management arrangements.

Communication between partners. Relationships on the project between the Project Manager, the Project Implementation Team, the Project Steering Committee and the NMSP were strong. Face-to-face meetings were restricted, and many functions had to be carried out online. However, many of the stakeholders had professional relationships that preceded the project, for example from previous LRB EIIP projects in the similar location. Online communications platforms such as Whatsapp and Viber were used extensively to facilitate communication between project stakeholders.

#### 4.5 Project impact and sustainability

This section looks at the impact of the project on beneficiaries and the sustainability of these benefits. Specific questions in this section include:

- What were the most significant effects on the life of the project beneficiaries so far, particularly in light of the immediate economic shock of COVID-19 on remittance dependent communities in Karen and Mon state.
- Was there any evidence that the results of the intervention may have a positive contribution to the relevant SDGs and targets (explicitly or implicitly)?
- Was there a sustainability strategy/plan for the project? Is the strategy effective and realistic taking into consideration potential changes in the country due to the COVID 19 pandemic?
- Were there any gaps in the sustainability strategy/plan and how these could be addressed by the stakeholders, including other ILO-Yangon office and other ILO projects?

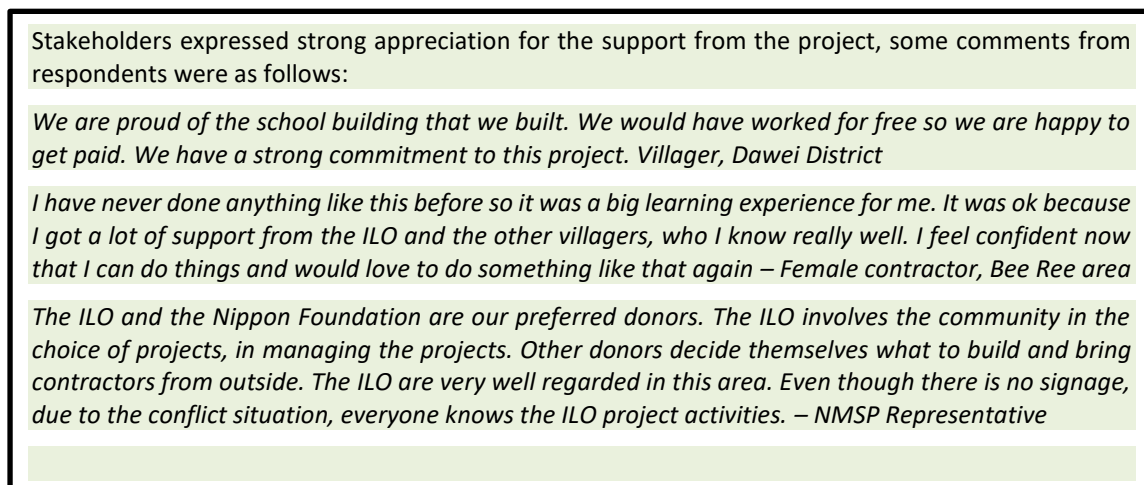
- Which project benefits show evidence that they will likely continue after external funding is discontinued?
- Did the trainings conducted in areas where trainees are/will be later able to generate increased income?
- Any evidence that operational maintenance committees tasked with infrastructure maintenance are completing this work as required?

**Impact of Component 1 activities** The project contributed to effects on the life of beneficiaries in terms of income for employment and infrastructure available for them to use (See Table 5 and 6 for the number of workers and the number of different infrastructure projects built). A total of 52,105 work-days were generated including 25,707 for females and 26,398 for males leading to MMK 404,279,940 (USD 192,794) being paid in wages. These funds can then be spent on goods and services in the local community leading to a multiplier effect on the economy. Contractor profits totalled MMK 136,896,700 (USD 65,284). Presumably some of these profits will also be spent in local communities, although this cannot be specifically measured. The infrastructure built also has benefits for communities, particularly as they are severely lacking in infrastructure and services. For communities that selected bridges, this helped them to access markets, schools and workplaces because the road often got flooded during the rainy season.

For Dawei District-based community that opted to build a school, this enabled students to stay on and study in the village until Grade 6. For communities that selected health centre, this enabled them to get medical treatment rather than go without as travelling to town centres was challenging due to restrictions during the COVID period, safety concerns since the Coup and weather. For communities that selected drinking water facilities, this improved their health by reducing consumption of unpotable water and reduced walking time for collection.

Some examples of stakeholders' perception of project benefits are included in Figure 14.

**Figure 14: Stakeholder views of the project**



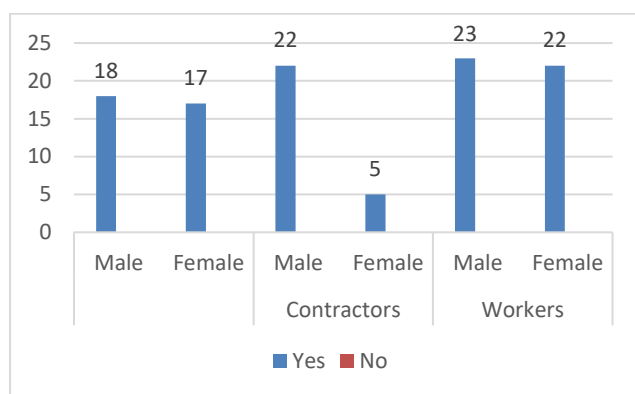
However, beneficiaries did perceive some challenging impacts. Contractors expressed that they had difficulty carrying out procurement of the construction materials due to delays in payments and an increase in the price of materials. ILO did revise the construction contracts, but contractors stated that nevertheless, their profits were reduced. This is reflected in the project results. Contractors suggested that tranche payments be reduced from three to two to minimise effects of payment delays. It is notable that in contrast to the final evaluation of the previous EIIP project where contractors complained about changes in their profit margin, for this evaluation contractors said that they didn't mind. In some locations, progress on construction was delayed by wet weather. This

caused challenges for contractors, project managing construction and workers, getting to and from work.

It is notable that in comparison to the previous project, where some VDC members questioned the rotation of work opportunities between households arguing workers should have the opportunity to work for longer, on this occasion, this was not mentioned. Some respondents mentioned that they hoped that a new project would come so that others would have the chance to participate.

**Impact of Covid-19 mitigation activities** Project outputs also included activities to reduce the spread of COVID-19. This included the provision of COVID-19 mitigation training as part of the project management training. This training was delivered to 130 males and 104 females in Three Pagoda Pass, Kawkareik, Kyar Inn Seik Gyi, Bee Ree and Dawei. The SOPs of the construction work included the wearing of masks, distancing and the taking of temperatures before workers entered the construction site. Figure 15 shows that beneficiaries were satisfied with the COVID-19 mitigation activities on the project. During evaluation interviews, some respondents mentioned that they found it hot and uncomfortable to wear masks but they understood that it was important. In Mon villages, respondents noted that they had minimal COVID-19 cases and deaths which they attributed to the control of the NMSP of people coming in and out of the villages.

**Figure 15: Were the necessary COVID-19 precautions put in place on the ILO project?**



In regard to the contribution of the project towards the SDGs, the SDG toward which the project works toward is SDG 8 which is focused on promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. While the sectoral focus remains on promoting economic growth, the orientation is about preventing households from falling into poverty rather than expecting much expansion and growth.

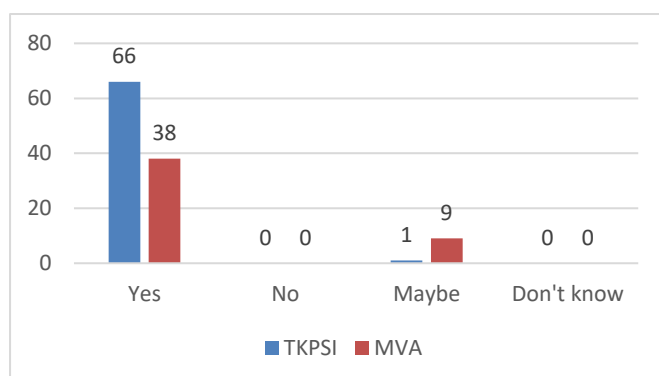
**Sustainability of outcomes for Component 1.** In ensuring the continuation of benefits from Component 1, the main focus has been on maintenance arrangements and sharing arrangements for water systems. For this purpose, the VDCs TORs included establishing Village Infrastructure Operation and Maintenance (VIOM) sub committees after construction had been completed. Funds left over from construction costs were to be invested to provide funds for Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of the infrastructure. About half of the villages have allocated land to grow crops for sale to generate funds for O&M. For water systems, user charging mechanisms were introduced to input into maintenance funds. Another potential sustainable outcome is that the O&M committees may also provide the initial basis for village microfinance systems with flow on economic benefits. During review meetings, several VDC member respondents stated that they were lending O&M funds to villagers with interest as a means of generating income. The project team should look at opportunities for developing microfinance programs out of the VDCs or potentially coordinating with another donor or CSO that might be interested in doing so.

The same systems were established with the previous project. Therefore, the project team should be able to see whether the approach is effective and garner any lessons learned by visiting villages from the previous project. During evaluation consultants, project staff informed the evaluation team that the VIOM committees from the previous project were operational. However, this is not documented anywhere. It would be useful for the ILO to conduct an impact assessment to document the progress of the VIOM committees from past projects.

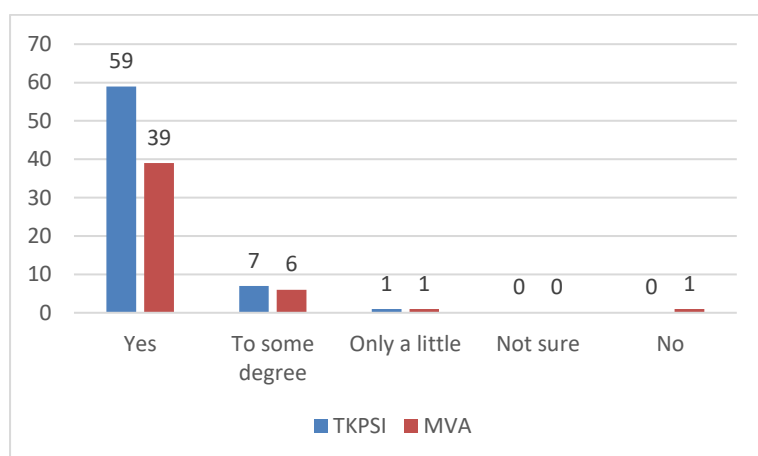
Another key issue in regard to sustainability of project outcomes relates to ensuring the ongoing availability of equipment, supplies and staffing for health and education facilities. This is clearly a challenge, given the dysfunctional governance environment. Ensuring this was one of the key reasons with the NMSP were invited to participate in the PSC. Previously only the ESP and the Mon State Party departments were included. In the education sector, teachers' salaries are being paid by a Myanmar education consortium that has been established by a pool of donors to support the education departments of the EAOs. Salaries are low as funds are limited but at least the system is relatively organised and transparent. In the health sector, the MNHC does not have donor funding and resource management is not transparent. For this reason 24 schools were built but only 4 health centres on the project.

**Component 2 impact and sustainability** Figures 16, 17 and 18 show trainees' responses to questions about their perception of the training. The findings show that the training was well received by participants.

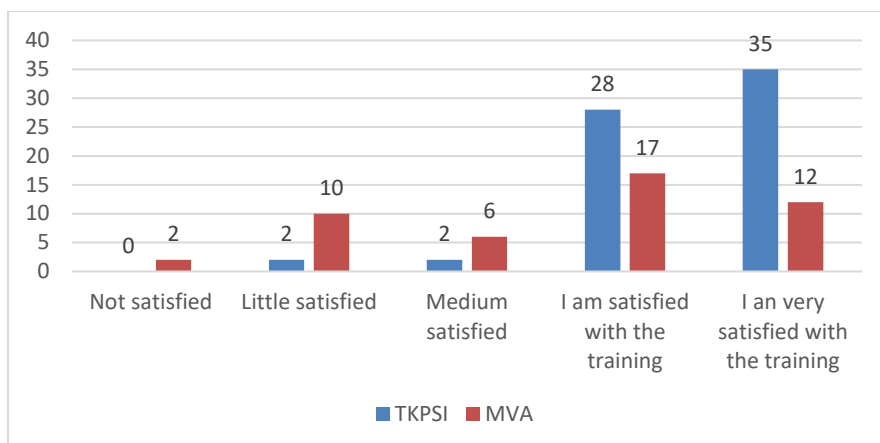
**Figure 16: Do you think the skills you have acquired through the training will assist you and your family to make some income?**



**Figure 17: Is your family or village leader convinced that the training is useful?**



**Figure 18: How satisfied are you with the skills you acquired?**



As part of the same study, the CDI also asked the students for their ideas about lessons learned and ideas for improvement and moving forward. Between the three batches the messages were fairly consistent. Students stated that they need more time to gain greater understanding of the course and for practical training. They requested two or three repeats of practical sessions, longer courses and more advanced courses. Students noted that learning in a small group (no more than 10 persons in a class) is better than in a mass group and learning offline is better (Zoom or Facebook class were not engaging) particularly as they had to pay for data. Some noted that they would like to see a greater choice of courses and some requested that food and accommodation also be provided for attendees. Another comment was that it would be helpful for capital to be provided for purchasing equipment.

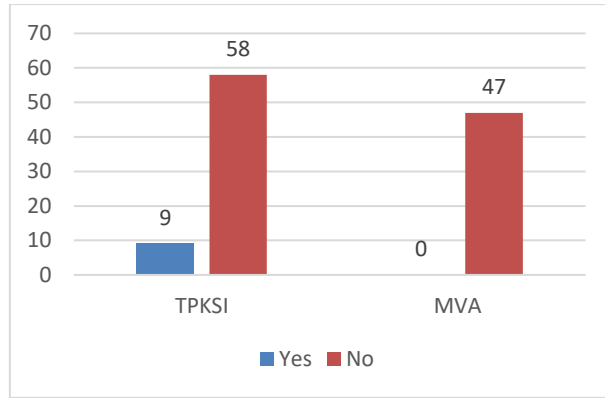
A key issue in regard to the impact of Component 2 is whether TVET training is leading to improved prospects for access to employment and small business by graduates. An impact assessment conducted by CDI showed that the training was assisting graduates to improve their livelihood and gain more income. When asked whether the skills acquired have been useful to support participants and their families financially, 91% stated the training has been useful to make income.

Upon graduation many participants had wanted to continue learning through doing an advanced course or start a business. Only 8% had managed to attend an additional training course, conveying the potential lack of opportunities in the region (Figure 19). 74% said that they have used the skills they learned since training (Figure 20). More than half (53%) said they have been successful in starting a business or a workshop since graduation with an additional 33% stating they are planning to (Figure 21). It is noticeable that half as many graduates from MVA (51%) as TPKSI (100%) have started a business or are planning to.

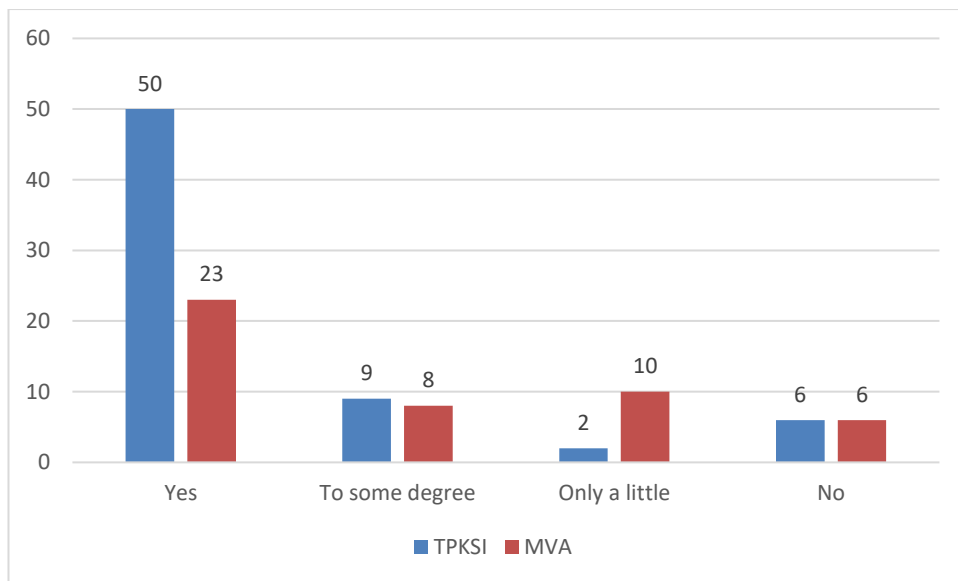
Graduates requested further advanced training courses and providing capital to provide the required equipment for graduates to start their own business. Common ways graduates have overcome the lack of necessary equipment include working with a skilled person that already has the necessary tools and equipment, saving money to buy their own, borrowing cash from friends and family, and borrowing equipment from friends and family. However, these options have not been available to all, the option for capital funding to appropriately selected graduates could have made the training more impactful in providing potential long-term livelihoods. This may be a useful area of focus for the project moving forward.

**Figure 19: Did you attend an advanced course after you completed the training at CVTC?**

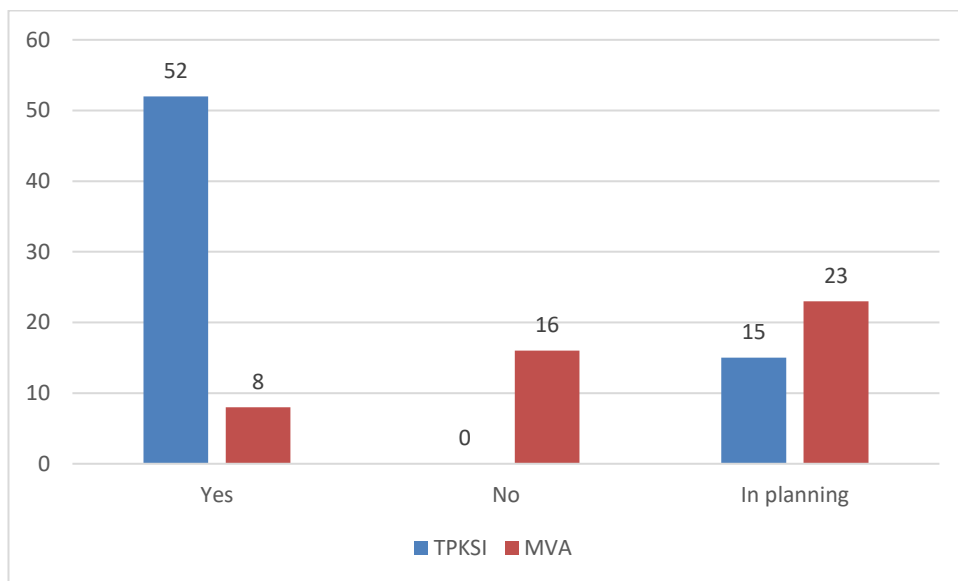




**Figure 20: Have you used the skills you acquired during the training?**



**Figure 21: Did you start a business or open a workshop after the training?**



#### 4.6 Cross cutting policy drivers including gender.

This criterion looks at cross cutting policy drivers including gender and addressed issues including:

- Was the Gender Framework of the project relevant and effective? Which factors influenced its implementation and achievement or non-achievements of gender related targets?
- To what extent was the project successful in increasing decision-making and employment opportunities for women in rural infrastructure works?
- To what extent was the project successful in promoting the development of gender responsive infrastructure that meets the needs of all end users – women and men, and people with disabilities?
- How well has the programme integrated environmental concerns and disaster risk reduction into its initiatives?

The gender framework framework sets out the rationale for integrating gender equality into the project activities and provides practical direction for doing so across sectors. included quotas for women’s equal participation in all aspects of the program, including decision making positions. The program performed well against the gender framework, with all gender targets being met:

- At least 40% of workers were required to be female, in fact 52% of the workers were female, up from 43% on the previous project.
- Women were to receive equal pay with men. Records indicated that they did.
- 45% of VDC members were required to be female, up from 40% on the previous project and females were included in key decision-making positions. In fact, more than 50% of key decision making positions were occupied by women.
- The project did not set gender targets for community contractors but 18% were female.
- At least 45% of TVET trainees were required to be female, in fact 55% were female and 45% were male.
- Courses represented the interests of both genders including three female oriented courses (cooking, baking and weaving) and three male orientated courses (masonry, carpentry and mechanics).

The project also sought to ensure youth were involved in the project with 28% of workers, 167 females and 214 males totalling 381 workers.

The project also sought to ensure that people with disabilities (PWD) also had opportunities to work on the project. 66 workers were people with disabilities totalling 4.9% of all workers. All the buildings were PWD friendly except one. This includes ramps and hand railing provided, single storey buildings, non-slip surfaces in areas that become wet, wide doors, low switches, attached toilets and hand washing units. The evaluation team noted a positive attitude to gender equality among all stakeholders. On the evaluation of the previous project, some stakeholders including NMSP did not fully agree with the ILO policy of equal pay for women and men (although payment was output not time based and the approach was clearly explained to all stakeholders). For this evaluation all village level respondents (including male and female workers, contractors and VDC members) were positive about the ILO "equality" approach, saying that there were no issues with women and men working together for equal pay. Workers informed the evaluator that men assisted women in carrying heavy items. Some women learned the traditionally male skill of bricklaying. Female contractors were particularly grateful that they had the opportunity to be a contractor which they had never done before. A lesson learned on the project was that where early childhood centres were built, the participation of women increased.

In regard to addressing environmental issues, the project team sought to address and mitigate the environmental impact of proposed activities, promote sustainable practices and consider the potential effects of climate change on the project's objectives and outcomes. Disaster risk reduction priorities were demonstrated in the construction of 5 footbridges, allowing for access out of these villages during the wet season, which otherwise cut off due to flooding.

## 5 Conclusions, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

The *ILO Myanmar COVID-19 Response program* has performed well in delivering results in very challenging circumstances. The dual crisis caused delays and restrictions on movement but fortunately dedication of stakeholders enabled the project team and its stakeholders to push through these challenges to achieve results. An approach to programming that combines effective recruitment strategies, commitments to equal opportunities for participation with clear and detailed procedures, adequate training and full transparency on all matters was effective in garnering the ownership and commitment of stakeholders. Working relationships developed over successive projects helped to facilitate cooperation on the project and enabled the project team to work well together through online modality as travel was restricted.

The project is a strong example of an EIIP investment from the ILO which generates pro-poor economic growth, village governance, community development and EAO administrative and governance capacity. The addition of TVET training to the mix has been beneficial to people in the area, particularly youth, given that the complex emergency is reducing scope for commercial agriculture. The TVET training appears to have been successful.

**Looking forward** with an operational approach focused on “resilience” in a complex emergency involving conflict and displacement, the ILO should continue to implement the successful approach of the current project. The project team have put forward a project to the New Zealand Government for a similar project design involving the LRB approach and TVET training in Tanintharyi, Mon Kayin, Kayah, and Shan States. The management arrangements are also the same with CSOs contracted as Ethnic Service Providers (ESPs), EAOs and their departments on Project Steering Committees. This is a positive development, but the proposal is lacking in detail which would explain how the project fits into a wider strategy in the region, how it builds on achievements through the current project and how some problematic aspects in the current project will be addressed in a future one.

- The current project had to discontinue operations in Kayin state due to excessive conflict, but the new proposal doesn't adequately explain how these challenges will be addressed in the future project. It would be useful for the ILO to collect, document and provide more information on the nature and trends in the conflict, particularly in regard to the selection of project locations. If this information is available from situation reports it should be included in project related documentation. This may involve engaging local stakeholders in contextual reporting.
- What will be the different strategies for operating in IDP vs non IDP areas? What adjustments need to be made to the modality to work in IDP areas? Would cash for work programs be different?
- Operation and Maintenance Committees have been established in all villages where the ILO has implemented the LRB EIIP approach since 2012. While the project manager and other stakeholders informed the evaluator that the VIOMs from the previous project were operating, there is no documentation of how they are going. For example, how many public forest products have been grown and sold. Where and to what extent are microfinance loans being provided? To what extent are WSS systems being maintained. How much water is being provided? Any conflict over water? Lessons learned on these matters should be being generated to feed into a new design.
- This also relates to issues pertaining to EAO administration. How many health and education facilities are equipped with staff, materials, medicines and equipment. Is the equipment being maintained?
- The Theory of Change for the current project was orientated around Resilience against livelihood shocks stemming from Covid-19. What is the overall humanitarian or development strategy for target communities moving forward?
- What is the overall strategy around TVET training? What are the features of this strategy that make it appropriate for complex emergency involving conflict and displacement?

- If the project is not equipped to provide access to finance, are there others who could? What is happening with the current programs? Will the same providers be involved? Will the courses they have developed continue to be provided? What will happen to the equipment? Will courses be certified? Will they meet demand for local and regional skills?
- The New Mon State Party has made gains in administrative capacity throughout the project. There are lessons learned regarding their service delivery capacity which should be considered when working with new EAOs. There is also the question of “Where to from here?” to further strengthen the NMSP. Currently, these matters are not extensively documented in project reports and the new proposal. It would be helpful if they were.

## 5.1 Lessons learned

Several lessons learned have been garnered from the implementation of the project. The major lessons learned have been attached at Annex 5 with guidelines on a suitable response and which stakeholder/s should take it forward. Good practices are also attached. Below is a brief summary of major lessons learned plus some additional operational lessons learned that don’t warrant a full page analysis but are nevertheless useful for the ILO and the project team moving forward.

Lesson Learned	Guidance for Addressing
An approach to programming that combines commitments to equal opportunities for participation with clear and detailed procedures, adequate training and full transparency on matters including finances can be effective in garnering the ownership and commitment of stakeholders.	Continue to expand the implementation of the LRB EIP implementation “package” in Myanmar with the various guidelines and procedures that have been already developed.
It is possible for Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAO) to move beyond being rebel forces towards becoming administrations capable of decentralised service delivery and public revenue generation even in a context of political instability. By supporting them donors may be able to protect against a collapse of governance during a complex emergency.	Continue to support ethnic armed organisations with differing strategies depending on their varying capacity.
Collaborating with Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs) is an effective way for humanitarian/development partners to access communities in hard to reach areas, cut off from Government support. Doing so does not need to imply that the development agency is aligned politically with the EAO.	Continue to collaborate with EAOs and promote collaboration to other UN Agencies
TVET training is a useful entry point for development partners due to its increased importance in livelihood strategies in post 2021 Coup Myanmar with constraints on agricultural trade and increase in demand for local services due to constraints on	Continue with TVET training developing specific strategies around supporting IDPs and integrating with certification systems and responding to market demand.

Lesson Learned	Guidance for Addressing
movement between villages and town and across the country. TVET training programs should be of sufficient duration, quality and linked to an understanding of service demand locally, regionally and in ASEAN.	
As crucial stakeholders in the complex emergency who are leading the resistance to the SAC and have on-the-ground understanding, it's important to nourish relationships with CSOs, particularly those with experience, capacity and values that align with the ILO	Continue collaboration with current experienced and effective CSOs whose values align with the ILO. Seek to develop relationships with others.
"Resilience" appears to be appropriate as an overarching goal in the current complex emergency in Myanmar rather than focusing on the Humanitarian and Development Nexus or the Peace and Development Nexus. The latter suggest progress and resolution is taking place when in fact this is not the case. Resilience focuses on community members ability to get on with their lives in ongoing difficult circumstances.	Promote "resilience" as an overarching framework for development partner engagement in Myanmar.
It is not possible to implement the EIIP in areas heavily affected by conflict while adhering to the Do No Harm principle. The risks are high in the current situation in Myanmar and development workers have been killed. Moreover, in areas of heavy fighting, infrastructure may be destroyed.	Apply other modalities in heavy conflict areas such as TVET and safe migration training. Mobile training or video training might be a last resort where access is not possible. Above all else, adhere to the Do-No-Harm principle.
CSOs may be facing risk of persecution and jail due to the SAC strategy of undermining them through non-renewal of their registration and heavy penalties for operating without registration permits	Undertake a careful risk assessment when collaborating with CSOs. Avoid overly bureaucratic approaches in the fraught operational environment but above all else, adhere to the Do No Harm principle.
The NMSP has more capacity to fund service delivery in the education sector, where it has donor support, than in the health sector where it does not	Provide more support for community infrastructure education facilities than health facilities. If and when collaboration with other EAOs takes place, consider how running costs for infrastructure facilities such as schools and health centres will be met before building them
Through successive EIIP projects the ILO is only providing one off short term support in each village for one or two infrastructure projects. There are opportunities for longer term village governance strengthening and	Look for funding opportunities which might support longer term engagement in villages or promote to other development partners opportunities to work in villages were the ILO has built infrastructure.

Lesson Learned	Guidance for Addressing
community empowerment such as developing microfinance.	
The inclusion of contingency funds as a budget item is a useful way to manage price fluctuations. The greater the price instability, the higher contingency funds should be as a percentage of contract values.	Continue to apply contingency funds for budgets for community contracting, setting the amount of these funds depending on the extent of price fluctuations
In a situation where the finance system is dysfunctional, transactions can be subject to delays	Consider minimising the number of transactions made to community contractors, notwithstanding the role of tranche payments in performance management.
The complex emergency is affecting agricultural trade leading to an increased focus among households on employment and non-farm small businesses as livelihood strategies rather than value adding agricultural production.	Continue to focus on and expand TVET training
With large numbers of children not attending school, there is a huge demand for TVET training	Continue to focus on and expand TVET training
TVET students require more than basic technical training in order to start a business. Some more advanced training is needed. For example, one month sewing training does not provide enough skills development to become a seamstress	Make available multi-level TVET courses moving from basic to advanced and/or longer courses.
Southeastern Myanmar community members are more responsive to in person training than online and video training, in part, because the latter requires access to internet data which is not always available or affordable	Continue to focus on in-person delivery with online/video training provided as a back-up or as a last resort (eg in conflict areas). Where online training is provided, internet access of participants must also be taken into consideration.
Although TVET training is effective in assisting beneficiaries to start a business, lack of access to capital remains an impediment	Consider linking with other initiatives focused on access to finance for TVET training to start a business
In each village, to ensure the right level of market demand, there should not be too few or too many people with the same type business	Conduct village level workforce planning as part of the TVET training strategy

Lesson Learned	Guidance for Addressing
The ILO appears to have a medium-term strategy around community empowerment and good governance in Southeast Myanmar and beyond that has been developed through successive projects but it is not well documented. For example, the level of functionality of O&M Committees from past projects is not documented. No real indicators have been developed for improved village governance. This is due to short term funding envelopes.	Medium term strategies for community empowerment and good governance in Southeast Myanmar and beyond should be articulated. Benefits achieved over the longer term should be documents. M&E strategies and indicators should be developed for longer term and more intangible objectives.
The lack of technical backstopping left a gap in the project in the areas of socio-economic analysis, strategic thinking and resource raising	The ILO should dedicate some technical backstopping to the future EIIP projects in Myanmar.
Where early childhood centres were built, the participation of women increased	Promote the construction of early childhood centres as part of the infrastructure mix

The following recommendations are made:

**Recommendation 1:** With an operational approach focused on “resilience” the ILO should continue to implement the successful approach of the current project involving the same components and management arrangements with the EAOs, ESPs etc. However, the proposal should be detail explain how the project fits into a wider strategy in Southeast Myanmar, how it builds on achievements through the current project and how some problematic aspects in the current project will be addressed in a future one. Adding some of this information would assist the donor in its funding decisions.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO, Donor	High	Within 6 months	Can be completed as part of current budget

**Recommendation 2:** The ILO should support areas which are vulnerable to conflict and displacement with suitable modalities such as safe migration training, perhaps being provided from Thailand and TVET training, perhaps through the use of a mobile clinic or video training as a last resort. Adherence to the Do No Harm principle for project staff and CSO partners and others is obviously paramount.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO, Donor	High	Within 6 months	Part of future investments.

**Recommendation 3** The ILO should promote “resilience” as an overarching framework for development partner engagement in Myanmar. “Resilience” appears to be appropriate as a high -

level goal in the current complex emergency in Myanmar rather than focusing on the Humanitarian and Development Nexus or the Peace and Development Nexus. The latter suggest progress and resolution is taking place when in fact this is not the case. Resilience focuses on community members' ability to get on with their lives in ongoing difficult circumstances.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO, Donor	High	Within 6 months	Part of future investments.

**Recommendation 4:** The ILO should continue collaboration with current experienced and effective CSOs whose values align with the ILO and seek to develop relationships with others. The ILO should also carefully consider how to approach the problem of non-renewal of CSO registration, adopting a flexible approach but being mindful of the risks to CSOs.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO, Donor	High	Within 6 months	Part of future investments.

**Recommendation 5:** The ILO should continue to focus on and expand TVET training in collaboration with effective CSO partners. The ILO should articulate, what are the features of this strategy that make it appropriate for complex emergency involving conflict and displacement? Given the investment already made with certain CSOs in terms of equipment provision and TOT, the ILO should consider continuing to work with TPKSI and MVA. A thorough assessment should be made of their effectiveness, particularly MVA which has not achieved as strong results as TPKSI. In order localities, new partners should be sought for collaboration. A careful risk assessment should be conducted when collaborating with CSOs. It's important to avoid overly bureaucratic approaches in the fraught operational environment (eg insisting on registration) but above all else, adhere to the Do No Harm principle. Based on the findings from this evaluation:

- it would be useful to make available multi-level TVET courses moving from basic to advanced and/or longer courses
- There should be a focus on linking with ASEAN skills and qualifications frameworks
- Continue to focus on in-person delivery with online/video training provided as a back-up or as a last resort (eg in conflict areas). Where online training is provided, internet access of participants must also be taken into consideration
- Consider mobile training operations in situations where beneficiaries can't easily move around
- Conduct village level workforce planning as part of the TVET training strategy to ensure the right level of market demand, there should not be too few or too many people with the same type business

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO	Medium	Within one year	Part of future investments.



**Recommendation 6:** The ILO should consider linking with other initiatives focused on access to finance for TVET training to start a business. Although TVET training is effective in assisting beneficiaries to start a business, lack of access to capital remains an impediment.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO, Donor	High	Within 6 months	Can be completed as part of current budget

**Recommendation 7:** The ILO should look for funding opportunities which might support longer term engagement in villages or promote to other development partners opportunities to work in villages where the ILO has built infrastructure. Through successive EIIP projects the ILO is only providing one-off short-term support in each village for one or two infrastructure projects. It would be useful to have a sense of ILO’s broader strategy. To facilitate this, medium term strategies for community empowerment and good governance in Southeast Myanmar and beyond should be articulated. Benefits achieved over the longer term should be documented. M&E strategies and indicators should be developed for longer term and more intangible objectives.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
LO, Donor(s)	Medium	Within one year	Part of future investments.

**Recommendation 8:** The ILO should consider minimising the number of transactions made to community contractors, notwithstanding the role of tranche payments in performance management.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
LO, Donor(s)	Medium	From 6 months to one year	Part of future investments.

**Recommendation 9:** The ILO should dedicate some technical backstopping to the future EIIP projects in Myanmar. The lack of technical backstopping left a gap in the project in the areas of socio-economic analysis, strategic thinking and resource raising.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO, Donor(s)	Medium	From 6 months to one year	Part of future investments.

## Annex 1: Terms of Reference

### Terms of Reference Independent Final Evaluation of Myanmar COVID-19 Response Programme by the ILO

#### KEY FACTS

Title of project being evaluated	Myanmar COVID-19 Response: Livelihoods support to remittance dependent communities
Country	Myanmar
Project DC Code	MMR/20/02/NZL
Type of Evaluation	Independent
Timing of evaluation	Final
Donor	New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT)
Administrative Unit in the ILO responsible for administrating the project	ILO-Yangon
Technical Unit(s) in the ILO responsible for backstopping the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment-Intensive Investment</li> <li>• DWT-Bangkok</li> </ul>
P&B outcome (s) under evaluation	Outcome 3: Economic, social and environmental transitions for full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all
SDG(s) under evaluation	SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth
Total project budget	NZD 3,000,000 <sup>12</sup>
Project start date	23 September 2020
Project end date	31 March 2023
National implementing partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rahmonnya Peace Foundation (RPF)</li> <li>• Covenant Development Institute (CDI)</li> </ul>
Duration of final evaluation	January – March 2023
Evaluation Manager	Sohana Samrin Chowdhury, Technical Officer, ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

<sup>12</sup> Equivalent to USD 1,976,284 during project initiation. Total project cost estimated in 2022 is USD 2,013,604.

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## Abbreviations and acronyms

CBO	Community Based Organization
CDI	Covenant Development Institute
CERP	COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan
CfW	Cash-for-Work
CPO	Country Programme Outcome
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CV	Curriculum vitae
DWCP	Decent Work Country Program
DWT	Decent Work Team
EAO	Ethnic Armed Organization
EIIP	Employment-intensive investment Programme
EM	Evaluation Manager
ESP	Ethnic Service Provider
EVAL	Evaluation office of the ILO
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HQ	Headquarter
IE	International Evaluator
ILO	International Labour Organization
KNU	Karen National Union
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NMSP	New Mon State Party
NZD	New Zealand Dollar
NZL	New Zealand
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
P&B	Programme and budget of the ILO for a biennium
PIT	Project Implementation Team
PSC	Project Steering Committee
REO	Regional Evaluation Officer
RPF	Rahmonnya Peace Foundation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
ToR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UN-SERF	United Nations Framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19
VDC	Village Development Committee
VIOMCs	Village Infrastructure Operation and Maintenance Committees
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

## 6 Background information

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) calls for Expressions of Interest (EOI) from a home-based International Evaluator (IE) to conduct an independent final evaluation of the ILO project *Myanmar COVID-19 Response: Livelihoods support to remittance dependent communities* (hereafter denoted as the ‘Project’), implemented by the ILO and funded by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). The intended evaluation will be undertaken in line with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the donor and the ILO, and as outlined in the [ILO Evaluation Policy 2017](#). It will be conducted in compliance with the principles, norms, and standards for project evaluations as outlined in the [ILO policy for evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations, 4th edition \(2020\)](#).

The overall objective of the final evaluation is to gather an assessment of the project’s performance regarding the foreseen objectives (outcomes and outputs), targets and indicators of achievement, and to provide strategic and operational recommendations.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic situation, it is planned that a home-based International Evaluator (IE) will conduct data collection remotely, with the research methodology largely based on desk review, online interviews (including online surveys, where possible) and stakeholder validation workshop. S/he will be assisted by two national consultants<sup>13</sup>, in conducting the online interviews, data collection from beneficiaries and stakeholder validation workshop. The data collection period for this evaluation is tentatively scheduled from end of January to mid-February 2023, with the stakeholder workshop taking place in the third week of February 2023.

The IE will report to the Evaluation Manager (EM) based in the ILO’s regional office in Bangkok. The EM for this evaluation has no prior involvement with the Project at any level and will manage the overall evaluation process with oversight provided by the ILO evaluation office (EVAL), and local context by the ILO Yangon Liaison Office.

### 6.1 Project context

Myanmar, a least developed country, made significant achievements in economic development and poverty reduction over the last decade. Decades of military rule left Myanmar poor with major economic disparity, and social, religious, and ethnic divisions until 2008 when a new Constitution paved the way for a partial and military – controlled political and economic reform. A gradual liberalization was allowed to begin in 2011, under a transitional military government, setting in motion an outlook of “triple transition”: from military to partial civilian rule, from a planned to a more market-based economy, and from widespread internal conflict to military – driven peace process. The first democratic elections, in 2015, resulted in rapid economic growth (above 7 percent per year) owing to more political stabilization, unification of exchange rates, initial liberalization of product and factor markets, integration into regional markets, and modernization of economic and financial institutions and systems.

Despite such positive socio-economic performance, data prior to the COVID-19 pandemic shows that millions of people in Myanmar had remained vulnerable and at risk of falling into poverty in the face of a negative shock. In the years 2020 and 2021 the situation deteriorated immensely when Myanmar economy was hard hit by four substantial shocks since the beginning of 2020 – the three waves of COVID-19 and the February 2021 coup. In 2021, Myanmar experienced more conflict events than any other countries in the world. Following the military takeover on 1 February 2021, conflict in Myanmar quickly increased, and by the end of the year it had overtaken Syria as the most conflict-affected country<sup>14</sup>. This dual shock brought massive job losses, stumbling wage increases and weakened the already frail social protection coverage. The International

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<sup>13</sup> Two national consultants will be hired by the ILO to provide interpretation and translation service to the IE. One with proficiency in Kayin language and the other in Mon language.

<sup>14</sup> Myanmar Food Security Cluster. (2022, June). *Understanding Conflict Dynamics in Myanmar through Conflict and Incident Data: A Food Security Perspective*. <https://food-security-cluster-myanmar.github.io/exploratory-data-analysis-acled-fsc/>

Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates that Myanmar's GDP shrank by 18% in 2021, while the Kyat exchange rate is in free fall. The relatively high inflation, rising food prices, and an acute cash shortage have plunged the population into economic desperation. The ILO estimates that 2.2 million jobs have been lost in the two first quarters of 2021. With a low vaccination rate, inadequate health services, and recent trends of escalating conflict, Myanmar continues to be highly vulnerable to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic as well as the political crisis.

Conflict-affected communities across southeast Myanmar are among the most vulnerable where households are struggling to meet their needs after losing regular sources of income from jobs and remittances, giving rise to increasing levels of debt and use of negative coping mechanisms. Despite the ceasefire agreements, these conflict-affected communities continue to face widespread poverty and vulnerability – especially in areas controlled by the Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs). Ongoing economic pressures are having a substantial effect on vulnerability and food security, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), livelihoods and protection, particularly for the large number of households in the states of Karen and Mon who depend on remittances from their migrant household members. Official statistics published by the Immigration Bureau of Thailand indicate that 183,375 Myanmar nationals departed Thailand between March 2020 and April 2021<sup>15</sup> through official border crossings in Karen and Mon states as a result of unemployment and a severe COVID-19 lockdown in Thailand. However, given the prevalence of irregular migration channels, the number was presumably much higher for migrant workers returning through irregular border crossings.

## 6.2 Description of the project and critical events

The [Myanmar COVID-19 Response: Livelihoods support to remittance dependent communities](#) is a 27-months ILO project, funded by the New Zealand MFAT, with a budget of NZD 3 million. The Project was initiated by the ILO on 23 September 2020 with an aim to provide safety net for those most vulnerable and affected within the remittance-dependent villages of Karen and Mon States of Myanmar in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic. Longer-term recovery support was another key objective of the Project, to be ensured through increasing employability and creating key rural infrastructure for the targeted beneficiaries. Lessons from previously implemented employment-intensive investments in rural infrastructure (EIIP) projects of the ILO in Myanmar indicated an acute need in incorporating more skills development activities, with a focus on livelihood skills and TVET courses on subjects that are relevant in the local context, and that improve the employability of the population of the communities. The Project, therefore, also builds on the lessons and good practices established by the three EIIP projects previously implemented by the ILO in Myanmar, and leverages the critical mass developed through those previous cycles of engagement and capacity development.

## 6.3 Project duration

The Project was initially designed for an implementation period of 18 months (from October 2020 to March 2022). Owing to the political crisis and over four-months of complete suspension of field activities (February to May 2021), combined with the rapidly spreading third wave of COVID-19 transmission in mid-2021, the Project received a total twelve-months extension for implementation. As per the agreed new timeline, the project will close on 31 March 2023.

## 6.4 Geographical coverage

Originally the Project interventions were expected to cover areas under the sole administration of Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAO) as well as areas under mixed administration with the government in the two states namely [Karen](#) and [Mon](#). However, due to rising conflicts which constrained ILO's engagement with the pre-identified Ethnic Service Provider (ESP)<sup>16</sup> to carry out project interventions in Karen state, the Project

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<sup>15</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2021. Socioeconomic Impact of COVID-19 on Migrant Workers in Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Thailand. IOM, Thailand

<sup>16</sup> The Project could not sign Implementation Agreement with the identified ESP as its registration certificate was expired in December 2020 and the organization was unable to renew its registration certificate till date due to the 2021 Myanmar coup d'état.

ceased any intervention in the mixed administrative areas and expanded its coverage (for TEVT training courses under Output 2) for Karen ethnic remittance-dependent communities in Bago and [Tanintharyi Regions](#) in June 2021. Within these areas, the Project selected isolated clusters of villages that are deprived of government support and have large numbers of highly affected, vulnerable, and poor population.

## 6.5 Expected results

The development objective of the Project is that ***the remittance-dependent communities in EAO areas of Karen State, Mon State and Tanintharyi Region will have better withstood the loss of remittances and be better equipped for future livelihood opportunities***<sup>17</sup>. The Project set out to provide employment opportunities to the remittance-dependent communities through improving community-demanded rural infrastructures, primarily focusing on WASH facilities, renovation of schools & clinics, and implementing upskills TVET training for the poor and vulnerable ethnic remittance dependent communities that are home to the pandemic affected migrant workers.

The table below illustrates the outcome and outputs that the Project seeks to achieve through its interventions. The table also includes 16 performance indicators which are being measured to demonstrate the achievements by the Project. Note that the original targets for the **Output Indicators** were revised during the second reporting cycle (April–September 2021) as a result of the delay in project implementation caused by the political unrest and inflation as well as lockdown due to COVID-19 transmission:

Table 9 Project outcome, output and targets

<b>Project Outcome:</b> Selected remittance-dependent communities in Karen State, Mon State and Tanintharyi Region better overcome the immediate economic shocks of COVID-19 through improved small-scale community infrastructure and increased options for employment or self-employment		
<b>Outcome Indicators</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75% of households in the over 30 project villages who consider the project’s interventions useful for the community as a whole and are satisfied with the process of the selection of individual beneficiaries and the infrastructure</li> <li>Extent to which the wage transfers through the Cash-for-Work activities have compensated for the loss of remittances</li> <li>Time and cost savings related to the improved or constructed infrastructure</li> <li>Extent to which the increased employability (through skills training) has contributed to (or is expected to contribute to) the loss of remittances caused by the coronavirus pandemic</li> <li>100% of constructed or improved infrastructure for which a self-sustainable village-level operation &amp; maintenance (O&amp;M) system has been established and operationalized</li> </ol>		
<b>OUTPUT 1:</b> Short-term employment provided through cash for work programmes in the construction or improvement of WASH facilities and other essential small-scale public infrastructure in poor, remittance dependent, communities in EAO and mixed administration areas		
<b>Output 1 indicators</b>	<b>Original target</b>	<b>Revised target</b>
Number of infrastructure assets constructed or improved on time, within budget and as per design specifications	Not less than 70 infrastructure assets	Not less than 55 infrastructure assets
Number of workdays of short-term employment provided across the targeted villages	About 56,000 workdays	About 47,000 workdays

<sup>17</sup> As per the Project’s Logical Diagram

Number of poor vulnerable households benefit from the short-term employment	At least 1,100 poor vulnerable households	At least 1,000 poor vulnerable households
Amount of cash injections in the villages through cash-for-work activities	Not less than NZD 1,470,000	Not less than NZD 1,200,000
Established and operational Village Infrastructure Operation and Maintenance Committees (VIOMCs) in each targeted village	N/A	Unchanged
<b>Output 2: Short certified TVET courses and non-certified livelihoods and construction training delivered that increase skills and employability of people in remittance dependent communities for domestic and migrant work</b>		
<b>Output 2 indicators</b>	<b>Original target</b>	<b>Revised target</b>
Number of beneficiaries from among the most affected poor and vulnerable households in participating villagers have successfully completed certified short TVET courses	180 beneficiaries	325 beneficiaries
% of trainees who completed the TVET courses, will receive on-the-job training in the project's infrastructure construction	At least 50%	Unchanged
% of beneficiaries who have successfully completed the certified TVET courses, have secured or have been assured job placement	Not less than 50%	Unchanged
Number of community contractors from participating villages have received training on construction and contract management aspects and have all completed the works in time, in budget and as per specification.	Not less than 70 community contractors	Not less than 55 community contractors
Amount of profit each community contractors have earned	Profit in the range of NZD 2,000 to NZD 3,000 each	Unchanged
All VDCs have received training required to exercise their roles and responsibilities.	N/A	Unchanged

Source: Project Results Framework and Second Progress Report of the Project

## 6.6 Management set-up

### 6.6.1 Internal institutional arrangement

The ILO Liaison Office in Yangon is responsible for overall management and coordination of the Project. The ILO team for this Project includes an Infrastructure Specialist/Project Manager, a National Project Engineer, an Assistance Finance & Admin Officer and a Driver.

The project is implemented by the ILO, in partnership and close coordination with two national implementing partners who has a long presence and trusted relationships with both local Karen and Mon Service Providers in the proposed project areas in assisting conflict-affect communities. The partners are (i) Covenant Development Institute (CDI), (i) Rahmonnya Peace Foundation (RPF), an ESP. The project intervention takes place within the scope of those Implementation Agreements signed between the ILO and the national partners. According to the Project design, a third implementation agreement was supposed to be signed with another ESP to implement activities in Karen state. This had to be postponed as the ESP was unable to renew their registration certificate to operate because of the difficulties posed by 2021 Myanmar coup d'état.

The Project is technically backstopped by the Employment-Intensive Investment Programme of the ILO and the ILO Decent Work Team in Bangkok (DWT-Bangkok).



The pandemic restrictions prevented onboarding of the Project team in the field due to full teleworking modality adopted by the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Myanmar from 28 March 2020. The ILO, including the Project team, was prepared to return to work with a phased approach from 1 February 2021. However, the plan had to be abandoned due to a state of emergency declared by the military Junta following the coup d'état on that very day. At the time of writing this ToR, the Project team was still working remotely.

### 6.6.2 Activity Steering Group

The implementation of the Project is overseen by an Activity Steering Group, comprising of representatives from the ILO and MFAT. The group provides active direction, periodically reviews interim results and reports, and identifies & executes adjustments to ensure achievement of the Project's results. The group meets on a quarterly basis (post-coup, frequency of meeting increased from the original six-monthly) to monitor and make decisions in handling delivery, political, organisational, technical, cost, management, cultural, and sustainability issues of the Project.

### 6.6.3 Operational Project Steering Committee (PSC)

An operational Project Steering Committee (PSC) provides policy guidelines and directives for project implementation, and ensures the Project is implemented in accordance with its principles, safeguards, standards, approved work plan, budget, and timeline. The operational PSC comprises of members from the local departments and ethnic CSOs/CBOs, working in the targeted areas and it meets every month to perform following functions: (a) overseeing the work of the PIT including staffing, work plan, budget, financial and progress reports; (b) providing policy direction and guidance to the Project; (c) reviewing the project progress and approval ahead of project disbursement of grants.

In addition to the operational PSC, there are two other institutional bodies that support the Project implementation – the Project Implementation Team (PIT) and the Village Development Committees (VDCs). On one hand the PIT supports the works of the PSC and consists of ESPs and its partner organizations to implement the project, the role of VDCs, on the other hand, is to facilitate the complete process of the selection of subprojects, supporting their implementation, selecting community contractors among others. Detail ToRs of all the operational committees will be made available to the IE during the evaluation.

## 6.7 Exit strategy

The exit strategy of the Project builds on ILO's experiences over the past years of working in conflicts affected areas of Myanmar. To ensure the sustainability of the interventions under output 1, the Project adopted the model for community-based operation & maintenance (O&M) of the infrastructure. The said O&M model has proved to be successful in previously implemented ILO-EIIP projects. The Project ensures active involvement of the communities in the development of the system and enhances their capacities for O&M at the community level. The Project also established Village Infrastructure Operation and Maintenance Committees (VIOMCs) for this purpose and is building their capacities to sustain the project results.

Furthermore, the Project follows-up outcomes of the vocational skills training through on-the-job mentoring/training and provides support in job placement in an attempt to sustain the contributions under output 2.

Lastly, capacity building activities are undertaken for the EAOs line departments and ESPs/ethnic CSOs to ensure that they assume the responsibility of after-project support to the local communities.

## 6.8 Strategic alignment

**ILO Program & Budget (P&B):** The Project contributes to ILO P&B Outcome 3: Economic, social and environmental transitions for full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all under programme and budget for the biennium [2020-2021](#) and [2022-2023](#).

**Decent Work Country Program (DWCP) and Country Programme Outcome (CPO):** This Project contributes towards the [Myanmar DWCP 2018-22](#): Employment and decent work and sustainable entrepreneurship

opportunities are available and accessible to all, including for vulnerable populations affected by conflict and disasters. The specific country programme outcome (CPO) that the proposal contributes to is outcome 1.1 – more women and men of working age have decent jobs or are engaged in entrepreneurship especially those in vulnerable employment conditions.

**Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** The Project is also aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and contributes towards the realisation of the targets set under SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

**Myanmar Government's and UNCT priorities:** The Project contributes to the priorities of the Government's COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan (CERP) that was in effect prior to the military takeover, and the UN Framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19 (UN-SERF). CERP is understood to no longer in effect, and the UNCT principle of engagement requires a re-programming on works that require engagement with the de facto authorities.

**ILO cross cutting policy drivers:** The Project also supports the Gender Equality and mainstreaming of a gender equality approach, a cross cutting theme of the ILO. The Project is designed to address pressing needs to create jobs, improve livelihoods and build resilience for remittance dependent communities – in particular women & youth – to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Project strategy includes increasing decision-making and employment opportunities for women in rural infrastructure works, promoting the development of gender-responsive infrastructure that meets the needs of all end users – women and men. The Project targets at least 40% men or women participation in the construction works and equal participation of women and men in training/skills development activities. A Gender Framework is developed by the Project that sets out the rationale for integrating gender equality into the project activities and provides practical direction for doing so across sectors.

## 6.9 Project achievements to date

During its first 24 months of operations, until 30 Sept 2022, the Project achieved the following:

- 28 infrastructure assets constructed or improved
- More than 38,800 workdays of short-term employment provided across 48 number of villages
- At least 1,200 poor vulnerable households' benefit from the short-term employment
- At least MMK 830 million cash injected through CfW activities
- 15 VIOMCs established
- 200 direct beneficiaries successfully completed short TVET courses
- 236 certified beneficiaries received on-the-job training in the project's infrastructure construction
- 56 number of community contractors from 48 number of villages received training on construction and contract management aspects
- 48 VDCs established by the Project in Karen State, Mon State and Tanintharyi Region
- 48 VDCs have received training required to exercise their roles and responsibilities.
- Surveys conducted by the PITs in 48 villages of Karen State, Mon State and Tanintharyi Region to identify priority needs and opportunities.

## 7 Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

In the ILO, final evaluations of Development Cooperation (DC) projects focus on the outcomes of project and the likelihood that the projects will achieve impact<sup>18</sup>. The evaluation provides an opportunity for in-depth reflection on the strategy and assumptions guiding the intervention. It assesses the extent to which an intervention achieved its objectives and may recommend adjustments to its strategy. It is also a means to assess how well intervention-level actions support higher level ILO strategies and objectives, as articulated in DWCPs and the ILO's P&B.

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<sup>18</sup> ILO policy guidelines for evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations, 4th edition

The purpose of the final evaluation of this Project is two-fold. The first purpose is summative. As the programme nears to its end date, the final evaluation will assess the performance of the project during its implementation period, as well as its success in achieving its planned results and objectives. This assessment will take into account relevance and validity of design, coherence, effectiveness including effectiveness of management arrangement, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the ILO's strategy, project approach and interventions. The effect of ongoing pandemic and continued political turmoil in the country will be at the heart of the assessment.

The evaluation is also intended to be forward looking and provide findings and lessons learned and emerging good practices for improved decision-making. Thus, the second purpose of the evaluation is to draw lessons and good practices from the project implementation so that the ILO, project donor and stakeholders can improve future projects and programmes of similar nature, within and outside Myanmar and the targeted Project areas, as well as to consider potential follow-up support after the end of the Project.

## 8 Evaluation scope

The scope of the final independent evaluation covers the entire Project period i.e., it will encompass all activities and components of the Project under the direct responsibility of the ILO from its start in October 2020 and up to the actual time of the final evaluation. It will focus on the Project's achievements and its contribution to the overall socioeconomic improvement of the targeted communities and beneficiaries in southeast Myanmar. In particular, the evaluation will analyse on what worked, what did not work, and why this is the case through measurement of progress towards all Project outcomes, *intended and unintended*, produced since the start of the Project. It will further assess the overall level of achievement of the two outputs to understand how and why these have been achieved and to what extent. Recommendations, emerging from the evaluation, should be strongly linked to the findings of the evaluation and should provide clear guidance to the ILO and its stakeholders on how they can address them.

The evaluation will integrate gender equality, disability inclusion & non-discrimination, and impact of the COVID-19 throughout its deliverables and process. It should be addressed in line with [ILO/EVAL Guidance Note no. 3.1](#), and [Guidance Note no. 4.5](#) to ensure stakeholder participation. Due to escalated armed conflicts, reaching adequate stakeholder participation might be challenging. The IE, however, will make the best effort to engage the key national stakeholders in coordination with the Project team and implementing partners. The evaluation report should elucidate the factors leading to reduced level of stakeholder engagement and utilize the analysis to complement the findings of different evaluation criteria (coherence, effectiveness in particular) and infer further lessons for the ILO.

In addition, the evaluation should seek to integrate sensitive and timely conflict analysis throughout the process into its design, approach, reporting and validation.

The evaluation should also pay a specific attention to how the project is relevant to the ILO's global programme framework including P&B, contribution of the project to SDGs ([Myanmar sustainable development plan 2018-30](#)) and UN country frameworks, and COVID-19 response.

### 8.1 Users of the final evaluation

The main users of this independent final evaluation will include the ILO management in Myanmar, regional and headquarters level, the ILO's tripartite constituents, the partners and donor of the programme.

## 9 Evaluation criteria and questions

The independent final evaluation will adhere to the six OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria that serve as the basis upon which evaluative judgements are made. More specifically, the Project will be assessed against the following evaluation criteria:

- **Relevance**, the extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change
- **Coherence**, the compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution
- **Effectiveness**, the extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups
- **Efficiency**, the extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way
- **Impact**, the extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects, and
- **Sustainability**, the extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue

[The ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation](#) and their technical and ethical standards and the Code of Conduct for Evaluation of the UN System are established within those criteria, and the evaluation should therefore adhere to these to ensure an internationally credible evaluation.

Below is a draft list of the *Evaluation Questions*. The IE is encouraged to adapt the evaluation questions. If the IE wishes to propose any fundamental changes to the evaluation questions, s/he should do so after consulting the EM and shall reflect the changes in the *Inception Report*. The evaluation questions should consider how data collection can avoid fuelling further tensions and putting affected people/communities at risk.

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions
Relevance and validity of design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the project still relevant to beneficiaries', global, country, ILO and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, considering the changes in circumstances (the 2021 coup d'état)? What is the relevance of the Project as perceived by the local population and beneficiaries?</li> <li>• How has the Project responded flexibly to changing circumstances over time? Did the Project address the major causes of vulnerability and respond to livelihood &amp; employment issues among remittance-dependent communities, including women and youth?</li> <li>• Are the stated goals, objectives and outputs relevant to issues (and their effects) that are central to the situation of pandemic and ongoing conflict and fragility? Was there a measurable relationship between project outputs e.g. cash into communities, and project outcomes?</li> </ul>
Coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent other interventions and policies support or undermine the Project interventions, and vice versa?</li> <li>• Was the Project consistent with or influential to ILO national, regional and global strategic priorities and programming on labour migration, social protection and skills development, and make effective use of its comparative advantages?</li> <li>• To what extent there is synergies and interlinkages between the Project interventions and other interventions carried out by the ILO-Yangon office, the government, EAOs, ESPs, CSOs and social partners?</li> <li>• How the Project adds value in relation to others and how duplication of effort is avoided?</li> </ul>
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Given the size of the project, its complexity and challenges under Covid-19 as well as the political instability in Myanmar, have the existing management structure and</li> </ul>

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions
	<p>technical capacity been sufficient and adequate? To what extent the Project received political support to navigate local political and security challenges?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the project been receiving adequate political, technical and administrative support from the ILO and its partners? If not, why? How did the Project address this?</li> <li>• Was the Project’s use of resources optimal for achieving its intended results (financial, human, institutional and technical, etc.)? Were activities completed on-time/according to work plans? Was the funding and timeframe sufficient to achieve the intended outcomes?</li> <li>• Which project activities represented the greatest value for money in terms of achieving objectives and outputs of the project?</li> <li>• Were cost-sharing arrangements or in-kind contributions sought from partners to complement the project’s resources (from other ILO projects, inter-agency initiatives, cooperation with tripartite constituents and CSO partners, etc.)? Which were the most effective for leveraging project resources?</li> <li>• What was the impact of the major challenges/risks that affected programme efficiency and performance (incl. those related to COVID-19 and the February ’21 coup)? How did the Project manage those challenges/risks to continue delivering impact?</li> </ul>
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent did the Project achieve the targets set forth in its logical diagram and results framework? What were the internal and external factors that influenced achievements or non-achievements of results (including but not limited to management, human resources, financial aspects, regulatory aspects, implementation modifications or deviation from plans)? How did the Project respond to changing context, particularly the political upheaval, and conflict, and how effective were the responses in maintaining safety and delivering results?</li> <li>• Has an effective Risk Analysis and a Monitoring, Evaluation (M&amp;E) and Reporting system been established and implemented, including the regular/periodic meetings among project staff and with the beneficiary, donor and key partners? Are those systems effective to aid result-based management and to ensure expected results of the Project? To what extent the M&amp;E and reporting system is able to collect and use disaggregated data by sex, by age (youth), people with disabilities, and age (and other categories that the Project has identified)?</li> <li>• Were management and governance structures effective – from implementation to donor/ILO meetings? Was technical backstopping sought and received from specialists when needed, and were arrangements effective? How effective is communication between the different actors involved, including between the ILO and EAOs, Village development committees, civil society partners etc?</li> <li>• Were local communities or affected populations involved in monitoring activities, including marginalised groups such as women, youth, people with disabilities (PWDs)?</li> <li>• Were the monitoring tools and resources adapted to meet real-time needs on the ground, if needed?</li> </ul>
Impact orientation and sustainability of project benefits <sup>19</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were the most significant negative or positive, intended or unintended, effects on the life of the ultimate project beneficiaries so far? How did the Project interventions address the immediate economic shocks of COVID-19 among selected remittance-dependent communities in Karen and Mon State?</li> </ul>

<sup>19</sup> it may be difficult to attribute impact to the Project given the current context in Myanmar. Therefore, the evaluation focus in this regard could relate to the Project’s intended or unintended longer-term results. The same reasoning applies in measuring sustainability.

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was there any evidence that the results of the intervention may have a positive contribution to the relevant SDGs and targets (explicitly or implicitly)?</li> <li>• Was there a sustainability strategy/plan for the Project? Is the strategy effective and realistic taking into consideration potential changes in the country due to the COVID 19 pandemic? Were there any gaps in the sustainability strategy/plan and how these could be addressed by the stakeholders, including other ILO-Yangon office and other ILO projects?</li> <li>• Which project benefits show evidence that they will likely continue after external funding is discontinued?</li> <li>• Did the trainings conducted in areas where trainees are/will be later able to generate increased income?</li> <li>• Any evidence that operational maintenance committees tasked with infrastructure maintenance are completing this work as required?</li> </ul>
Gender and other Cross Cutting issues including COVID 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was the Gender Framework of the Project relevant and effective? Which factors influenced its implementation and achievement or non-achievements of gender related targets?</li> <li>• To what extent was the Project successful in increasing decision-making and employment opportunities for women in rural infrastructure works?</li> <li>• To what extent was the Project successful in promoting the development of gender-responsive infrastructure that meets the needs of all end users – women and men, and people with disabilities?</li> <li>• To what extent has the Project promoted the relevant international standards and good practices, or ratification and application of the ILS, inclusion of people with disability, social dialogue and tripartism?</li> <li>• How well has the programme integrated environmental concerns and disaster risk reduction into its initiatives?</li> </ul>

## 10 Cross cutting issues

The IE must explicitly refer to gender and disability issues throughout the evaluation activities within the his/her responsibilities and any outputs, including the Final Evaluation Report which shall mainstream gender and disability issues. The evaluation shall apply gender and disability analysis by involving women, men and PWDs in the data collection, meetings and data analysis; justification of programme documents; reviewing of programme’s objectives and indicators in line with its sensitivity towards gender and disability; and assessing outcomes in terms of its role in improving lives of women, men and PWDs.

The analysis of gender-related concerns will be based on the ILO/EVAL Guidance Note 3.1 (June 2020). The evaluation will be conducted following UN evaluation standards and norms and the glossary of key terms in evaluation and results-based management developed by the OECD/DAC.

## 11 Methodology

[The ILO’s policy guidelines for evaluation \(4<sup>th</sup> edition, 2020\)](#) provides the basic framework for conducting independent final evaluation of DC projects. The evaluation will be carried out according to the ILO’s standard policies and procedures and comply with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) norms and standards and the OECD/DAC evaluation quality standards.

As the COVID 19 pandemic continues to persist, this evaluation will be also guided by [ILO/EVAL Operating procedures No. 1, Implications of COVID-19 on evaluations in the ILO, Practical tips on adapting to the situation, 24 April 2020 \(v.3\)](#).

The evaluation will draw on both subjective (interviews, focus group discussions, stakeholder workshop) as well as objective sources (development documents, donor reports, M&E reports, statistics etc.). The proposed methodology for the current evaluation includes:

- **Stakeholder analysis.** Since the Project operates in a political environment under conditions of considerable tension, it also covers a full spectrum of people from the powerful to the powerless, and the evaluation should consider the views and interests of all stakeholders, as much as possible. The IE should conduct a preliminary background analysis to determine who the stakeholders are and how they are affecting or are affected by the Project.
- **Desk review** of relevant documents, including:
  - The project document (ProDoc) with all annexes
  - Relevant national plans
  - Myanmar sustainable development plan 2018-30
  - Myanmar DWCP 2018-22
  - MoU Agreement between the ILO and MFAT, and subsequent amendments
  - Logical diagram and results framework
  - Project Operational Procedure Manual, 2020
  - Original and revised work plan
  - Original and revised financial documentation
  - Research materials/publications/knowledge products produced through the Project or by relevant stakeholders
  - Policy documents reviewed/revised by the programme
  - The skills development courses and related materials
  - The project's M&E framework and plans
  - The biannual project progress reports to the donor
  - Partner reports including progress reports, needs assessments reports, impact assessment reports
  - ASG and PSC meeting minutes
  - The ILO's Evaluation guidance documents
  - ILO P&B 2020-21 and 2022-23
  - Communication and visibility products
- **Interviews and focused group discussions (FGDs).** Access to local communities is currently restricted in light of security issues as well as the pandemic situations. In the absence of face-to-face interviews, data collection using electronic channels will be used as the reasonable alternative for this evaluation. The IE can choose from an array of videoconferencing platforms to conduct the interviews and FGDs including MS Teams, Google Meet, Zoom and Skype, as long as those are accessible by the respondents. Telephonic interviews may be done in the absence of internet connectivity. The IE will be accompanied and supported in terms of interpretation services by two interpreters – one for Kayin and the other for Mon language, to be hired locally. The main sources for answering the evaluation questions will be the following stakeholders, including but not limited to:
  - Project beneficiaries in the two states & one region (e.g. community contractors, workers, TVET trainees etc.)
  - The Project team in Myanmar
  - ILO Liaison Officer and Deputy Liaison Officer for Myanmar
  - Representatives of the EAOs and their relevant departments
  - Senior management of the implementing partners (RPF and CDI)
  - Project Managers, engineers and other staffs of the national implementing partners
  - Members of PSCs, PITs, VDCs and VIOMCs
  - Representatives from the regional/state, provincial and village level agencies

- MFAT focal person for the Project
- ILO Migration project CTA who supported the Project design & implementation
- ILO projects/programmes of relevance (for assessing synergies and coordination)
- TVET institutions supported by the Project

Note that the availability of stakeholders, specifically members of the EAOs, can be challenging in the current context of Myanmar. Therefore, the IE must rigorously and bearing conflict sensitivity in mind, consult the stakeholder list for interviews with the Project team and include the rationale for selecting specific individuals in the Inception Report. The interview schedule must be made available to the Project team in advance to support necessary logistic arrangements.

- **Direct observations** of project activities, in particular infrastructures such as improvement and construction of school buildings, health centres, WASH facilities, as well as TVET trainings. This could be arranged via videoconferencing, in coordination with the Project team and implementing partners.
- The IE may use **surveys** (online or offline) to collect data for the evaluation from the target groups, if applicable.
- **Validation workshop** will be held to discuss and validate the preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations with all key stakeholders. This will be conducted after the preliminary findings are presented to the Project & the EM, following data collection.

The IE would be provided with a list of recommended/potential persons/institutions to interview that will be prepared by the Project Team in consultation with the EM.

Opinions revealed by the stakeholders will improve and clarify the quantitative data obtained from project documents. The participatory nature of the evaluation will contribute to the sense of ownership among stakeholders. Quantitative data will be drawn primarily from project documents including the Progress Reports provided to the donor.

**Data analysis and Triangulation /Validation:** The IE will ensure that the findings are evidence based. This implies that perceptions, hypotheses and assertions obtained in interviews will be validated through cross checks and triangulation of sources.

It is noted that the evaluation methodology will be designed by the IE taking the evolving situation and the associated risks into account. The methodology should include multiple approaches, with analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data, and should be able to capture the contribution of each output to the achievement of expected outcomes.

To the extent possible, the data collection, analysis and presentation should be responsive to and include issues relating to diversity, gender and non-discrimination, including disability issues. All gender concerns should/will be addressed in accordance with [ILO/EVAL Guidance Note no. 3.1, Integrating gender equality in monitoring and evaluation](#).

If the IE wish to propose any fundamental changes to the methodology of this evaluation, s/he should do so after consulting the EM and shall reflect the changes in the *Inception Report*.

## 12 Main deliverables

The IE will deliver the following main outputs:

### **Deliverable 1: Inception report**

The inception report is a means of ensuring mutual understanding of the IE's plan of action and timeline for conducting the evaluation. It also provides additional guarantee of adherence to, and interpretation of the TOR. The IE will draft the inception report after completing review of the available documents and online briefings/initial discussions with the Project team, relevant ILO



officials/specialists and, if required, the donor. The inception report will include the final evaluation questions, data collection methodologies and techniques, and evaluation tools as well as a completed [Standard Evaluation Instrument Matrix](#). The methodology should clearly state the limitations of the chosen evaluation methods, including those related to representation (and non-representation) of specific group of stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Any fundamental changes to the [Proposed Evaluation Questions](#) or [Proposed Evaluation Methods](#) illustrated in this TOR must be captured in the inception report.

The inception report will be prepared in accordance with the [ILO/EVAL Checklist 4.8: Writing the inception report](#), and be approved by the EM.

### **Deliverable 2: Presentation on the preliminary findings of the evaluation and validation workshop with stakeholders**

Followed by the data and information collection, the IE will prepare a PowerPoint presentation detailing preliminary findings of the evaluation and will propose key evaluation recommendations. The findings will be shared with the ILO and later validated at the stakeholders' workshop arranged virtually. The ILO Project team will provide necessary administrative and logistic support to organise the stakeholder validation workshop, while the interpreters will support the IE in conducting and providing translation support during the validation workshop.

### **Deliverable 3: Draft evaluation report**

The draft evaluation report should be prepared in accordance with the [ILO/EVAL Checklist 4.2: Preparing the Evaluation report](#). The draft report will be improved by incorporating EM's comments. Then the EM will circulate the draft report to key stakeholders including the Project team, the ILO officials concerned with this evaluation, the donor representatives and national partners for comments.

### **Deliverable 4: Final evaluation report with evaluation summary (in standard ILO format)**

The IE will incorporate comments received from the ILO and other key stakeholders into the final evaluation report. The evaluator must ensure that it is done in accordance with the [ILO/EVAL Checklist 4.2: Preparing the Evaluation report](#).

The reports and all other outputs of the evaluation will be produced in English language. All draft and final reports, including other supporting documents, analytical reports and raw data should be provided in electronic version compatible with Microsoft Word/Excel/PowerPoint for Windows. The final evaluation report should not exceed **30 pages** (*excluding annexures*). Findings, gaps and results should have a logical flow, be credible and clearly presented.

The draft report will be circulated to key stakeholders and partners of the Project, donor, relevant national partners, and the ILO's staff i.e., the project management, the ILO's Regional office in Bangkok, the ILO specialists for their review. Comments from all the stakeholders will be consolidated by the EM who will ensure the IE receives and incorporates those feedback into the revised evaluation report. If required, the IE will prepare an additional matrix depicting all modifications made in the evaluation report, categorized by stakeholder comments. The evaluation report will be considered final only when it gets final approval by the ILO's Evaluation Office. The quality of the report will be assessed against the [ILO/EVAL Checklist 4.9: Rating the quality of evaluation report](#).

Ownership of the data from the evaluation rests jointly between the ILO and the IE. The copyrights of the evaluation report rest exclusively with the ILO. Use of the data for publication and other presentation can only be made with the prior agreement of the ILO. Key stakeholders can make appropriate use of the evaluation report in line with the original purpose and with appropriate acknowledgement.

**Draft and final evaluation reports** should include the following sections:

1. Cover page with key project data (project title, project number, donor, project start and completion dates, budget, technical area, managing ILO unit, geographical coverage); and evaluation data (type of evaluation, managing ILO unit, start and completion dates of the evaluation mission, name(s) of evaluator(s), date of submission of evaluation report). See [Checklist 4.3: Filling in the Evaluation Title Page](#) for further detail.
2. Acronyms and abbreviations
3. Executive Summary (according to [Checklist 4.4: Preparing the Evaluation Report Summary](#) and [ILO template](#)) with key findings, conclusions, recommendations, lessons and good practices (*lesson learned and good practice need to be annexed using standard ILO format*)
4. Description of the project and its intervention logic
5. Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation
6. Methodology and evaluation questions
7. Limitations
8. Presentation of findings for each criterion
9. A table presenting the key results (i.e., figures and qualitative results) achieved per output & KPIs
10. Conclusions and recommendations, (including to whom they are addressed)
11. Lessons learned (see [ILO template](#)), emerging good practices<sup>20</sup> (see [ILO template](#)) and models of intervention/possible future direction
12. Appropriate Annexes (list of meetings and interviews, ToR, and other relevant documents, lesson learn and good practice using standard ILO format, maps etc).
13. Standard evaluation instrument matrix (adjusted version of the one included in the Inception report)

## 13 Management arrangements

### 13.1 Responsibilities of the evaluation manager

The evaluation will be managed by an EM working for the ILO with no prior involvement with the Project, with oversight provided by the ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL). The IE, on the other hand, will report to the EM and oversee the work of the national consultants (interpreters).

For this assignment, the EM is Ms Sohana Samrin Chowdhury who will coordinate this evaluation in consultation with Ms Pamornrat Pringsulaka, Regional Evaluation Officer (REO) of ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. The EM will undertake the following tasks, in coordination with the REO:

- Serve as the first point of contact for the IE and national consultants
- Provide background documentation to the evaluator, in collaboration with the Project team
- Brief the IE on ILO evaluation procedures
- Oversee proper stakeholder involvement
- Approve the inception report
- Monitor the implementation of the evaluation methodology, as appropriate and in such a way as to minimize bias in the evaluation findings
- Review and circulate draft and final evaluation reports to all concerned stakeholders for comments
- Assist with the stakeholder workshop
- Consolidate stakeholders' comments for the IE
- Review final evaluation report to ensure quality
- Submit final report package (including the submission form and evaluator review form) to the REO for initial approval and then send to EVAL HQ for formal approval
- Once approved by EVAL, the EM endorses payment to the IE and national consultants

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<sup>20</sup> Good practices refer to good approaches or practices of this project which can be further built upon by the project in the future and can also be replicated in other similar projects

### 13.2 Responsibilities of the project team

The Project team will handle all the contractual arrangements with the IE and national consultants, including logistic and administrative support to the evaluation throughout the process. The specific responsibilities of the Project team include:

- Provide all the project documents to be reviewed
- Provide all assistance to the IE and EM in finalising the interviewee list
- Ensure IE has adequate documentation, assist in data gathering and logistical support
- Arrange meetings and coordinate exchanges between the IE and partners
- Participate in the evaluation related workshop(s) and provide input to EM on the draft evaluation report

### 13.3 Responsibilities of the independent international evaluator

Last but not the least, the IE will perform the following tasks, in relation to the scope and methods of the evaluation listed above in the ToR:

- Undertake the evaluation according to the agreed ToR
- Conduct all interviews using electronic means. The interpreter will support the IE in conducting and providing translation support in stakeholder meetings, and focus group discussions and survey (if any), under the IE's supervision
- Prepare MS PowerPoint presentation on the preliminary findings of the evaluation, present it to the ILO and incorporate feedback into the draft evaluation report
- Conduct the validation workshop with stakeholders, validate preliminary findings & recommendations, and collect necessary information
- Prepare and submit inception report, draft and final evaluation reports to the EM
- Remain independent and hold sole responsibility for the substantive content of the final evaluation report which must adhere to EVAL quality requirements and formats

### 13.4 Desired competencies of the IE

As a general principle the IE should:

- adhere to internationally accepted good practices and solid ethical principles
- be skilled in implementing diverse evaluation methodologies
- ensure the evaluation is an inclusive and participatory learning exercise; and
- be culturally and gender-sensitive

In particular for this evaluation, the following competencies are required from the candidate:

- Holds no previous involvement/engagement in the design and delivery of the Project
- Has minimum of **ten years of experience** in conducting programme or project evaluations
- Holds **substantial working experience in implementing and /or conducting evaluation for projects/programmes in fragile & conflict affected states**, relating to migration, skills development, employment and cash for work
- Has **experience and knowledge on the socio-political context of the country, including an understanding of the ethnic and political dynamics in Myanmar's Southeast**. Previous experience of conducting an evaluation in Myanmar will be an added advantage.
- Has expertise and **extensive experience in designing M&E systems** for similar programme/projects
- Holds knowledge of the ILO's roles and mandate and its tripartite structure as well as UN evaluation norms and its programming
- Has excellent analytical skills and communication skills
- Has excellent report writing skills in English

## 14 Evaluation work plan with indicative timeline

Activity	Responsibility	Proposed timeline	Number of working days for IE
1. Preparation and finalisation of the evaluation ToR	EM/Project team/other stakeholders		-
2. Approval of the ToR	REO		-
3. ToR Advertisement	EM		-
4. Selection of the evaluation consultant	EM		-
5. Issuing excol contract based on the ToR prepared/signed	Project team	10 – 15 Feb	-
6. Briefing for IE on the ILO evaluation policy	EM	16/17 Feb	-
7. Reviewing programme documentation; Stakeholder mapping; Online interviews with the relevant ILO officials/specialists and donor; preparation and submission of the inception report to the EM	IE	16/17 – 24 Feb	7
8. Approval of the inception report, including ensuring any necessary adjustments by the IE	EM/Project team	24 Feb – 28 Feb	-
9. Data/information collection and presenting preliminary findings to the EM and Project team	IE & interpreter	1 – 14 Mar	10
10. Validation workshop with stakeholders	IE, EM, Project team	15 Mar	1
11. Drafting evaluation report; submitting draft report to the EM	IE	16 – 24 Mar	7
12. Sharing the draft evaluation report with all the concerned stakeholders, including the donor, for comments	EM	27 Mar – 3 Apr	-
13. Comments on the draft report collected and consolidated, and sent to the IE	EM	3/4 Apr	-
14. Finalisation and submission of the report to the EM	IE	5-7 Apr	3
15. Submission of final evaluation report to the ILO Evaluation Office	EM	7 Apr '23	-
16. Approval of the evaluation report	EVAL	11 Apr '23	-
<b>Total working days for the IE</b>			<b>28</b>

## 15 Legal and ethical matters

The evaluation will comply with UN Norms and Standards. UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) ethical guidelines will be followed. The IE will abide by the EVAL's Code of Conduct for carrying out the evaluations. The evaluator should not have any links to project management, or any other conflict of interest that would interfere with the independence of the evaluation.

## 16 Application

The **deadline to submit an Expression of Interest for undertaking this evaluation is Thursday, 15 December 2022, by 17:00 hrs (Bangkok time)**. Applications should be sent by e-mail with the subject header **"ILO/Myanmar COVID-19 Response Programme Final Evaluation"** to the Evaluation Manager, Ms. Sohana Samrin Chowdhury ([chowdhuryso@ilo.org](mailto:chowdhuryso@ilo.org)), copied to Ms. Pamornrat Pringsulaka ([pamornrat@ilo.org](mailto:pamornrat@ilo.org)).

## 17 All relevant ILO evaluation guidance notes, checklists and standard templates

All relevant ILO evaluation guidance notes, checklists and standard templates can be found accessing the following links:

1. ILO Evaluation Guidance  
[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_853289.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_853289.pdf)
2. Code of conduct form (to be signed by the evaluator)  
[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746806.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_746806.pdf)
3. Checklist 4.8 Writing the inception report  
[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746817.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_746817.pdf)
4. Checklist 4.2 Preparing the evaluation report  
[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746808.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_746808.pdf)
5. Checklist 4.9 Rating the quality of evaluation report  
[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746818.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_746818.pdf)
6. Template for evaluation title page  
[http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS\\_166357/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_166357/lang--en/index.htm)
7. Template for evaluation summary  
[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746822.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_746822.pdf)
8. Template for Lessons Learned  
[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746820.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_746820.pdf)
9. Template for Emerging Good Practices  
[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746821.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_746821.pdf)

10. Guidance notes 3.1 Integrating gender equality in M&E of programmes

[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_165986.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms_165986.pdf)

11. Guidance notes 4.5 Stakeholders engagement

[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746724.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_746724.pdf)

## Annex 2: Stakeholder and Beneficiary Sampling

Delivery organisations include:

- The project Donor: New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT)
- The ILO: Including the Evaluation Manager, representatives from the ILO Liaison Office in Yangon, the project Manager and Project Staff
- Ethnic Armed Organisations: Acting as a oversight level governing body in lieu of an official Government including the New Mon State Army
- Project Steering Committee: including representatives from NMSP including the Mon Department of Education and Department of Health
- Ethnic Service Providers including Covenant Development Institute (CDI) and Rahmonnya Peace Foundation (RPF)
- TVET Providers including Tanintharyi Karen Peace Support Initiative (TKPSI) and Mountain View Academy (MVA).

Village level beneficiaries include:

- Village Development Committees (VDCs)
- Community Contractors
- Community infrastructure workers including skilled, semi-skilled and general workers including at least 40% women and 3% people with disability.
- Village Infrastructure Operation and Maintenance Committees (VIOMCs)
- TVET Trainees

Sampling Table for Beneficiaries of Community Infrastructure and Employment (Component 1)

	<b>Palaing Ja Pan Village, Three Pagoda Pass District, Karen State</b>	<b>Phelan Village, Bee Ree Area, Mon State</b>	<b>Khwi Kava Village, Kyar Inn Seik Gyi, Karen State</b>	<b>Wae Zin/Dhama Parla Yabyu township, Danei District, Tanintharyi</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Village Development Committee members</b>					
<b>Males</b>	16	5	19	8	48
<b>Female</b>	5	2	5	3	20
<b>Community Contractors</b>					
<b>Males</b>	5	3	6	7	21
<b>Females</b>	-	2	3	3	8
<b>Construction Workers</b>					
<b>Males</b>	2	5	5	7	19
<b>Females</b>	5	17	6	17	45

### Annex 3: Stakeholders interviewed during the Evaluation

Date	Participants	Organization	Place
1 March	<b>2 Male</b> Sonish, Aye Min Oo	ILO	Yangon
	<b>2 Male and 2 Female</b> Mi Keik Htaw Naing Tun Oo Min Nay Oo May Thet Sann  <b>Field Officers:</b> 4 Male and 1 Female Min Khant Lonn Maung Mi Tin Mar Win Nai Son G Win Nai Zaw Min Oo Nai Kyaw Moe	Project Implementation Team (PIT)	Mawlamyine, Mon State
2 March	<b>3 Male</b> Nai Hongsar Bong Khine Nai Htay Nai Layet Htaw	New Mon State Party	Mawlamyine, Mon State
	<b>4 Male and 2 Female</b> Nai Sike Chan Nai Khin Aye Mi Krat Non Nai Htaw Lawi Nai Ong Sorn Mi Non	Project Steering Committee (PSC) and Rahmonnya Peace Foundation (RPF)	Mawlamyine, Mon State
3 March	Village development Committees (VDCs) <b>16 Male and 5 Female</b>	NZL Project	Palaing Ja Pan village, Three Pagoda Pass, Karen State
	Community Contractors <b>5 Male and Female</b>	NZL Project	Palaing Ja Pan village, Three Pagoda Pass, Karen State
	Workers and beneficiaries <b>2 Male and 5 Female</b>	NZL Project	Palaing Ja Pan village, Three Pagoda Pass, Karen State
6 March	Village development Committees (VDCs) <b>19 Male and 5 Female</b>	NZL Project	Khwi Kwa village, Kyar Inn Seik Gyi, Karen State
	Community Contractors <b>6 Male and 3 Female</b>	NZL Project	Khwi Kwa village, Kyar Inn Seik Gyi



	Workers and beneficiaries <b>5 Male and 6 Female</b>	NZL Project	Khwi Kwa village, Kyar Inn Seik Gyi
7 March	Village development Committees (VDCs) <b>5 Male and 2 Female</b>	NZL Project	Phalan Village, Bee Ree (Ye Chaung Pyar), Mon State
	Community Contractors <b>3 Male and 2 Female</b>	NZL Project	Phalan Village, Bee Ree (Ye Chaung Pyar), Mon State
	Workers and beneficiaries <b>5 Male and 17 Female</b>	NZL Project	Phalan Village, Bee Ree (Ye Chaung Pyar), Mon State
8 March	Village development Committees (VDCs) <b>8 Male and 3 Female</b>	NZL Project	Wae Zin /Dhama Parla, Yabyu township, Dawei District, Tanintharyi
	Community Contractors <b>7 Male and 3 Female</b>	NZL Project	Wae Zin /Dhama Parla, Yabyu township, Dawei District, Tanintharyi
	Axel Schroeder, Operations Manager, Tim Davies, Program Advisor,	Covenant	
	Women workers and beneficiaries' group beneficiaries <b>12 Female</b>	NZL Project	Wae Zin /Dhama Parla, Yabyu township, Dawei District, Tanintharyi
9 March	<b>3 Male and 1 Female</b> Saw William Po Thiha Kyaw Soe Saw Pearl Htoo Trainer Naw Eh Hser khu Paw	Mon Alliance for Vigorous Action (MAV)	Bago
9 March	Naw Chaw Chaw Wai, Program Coordinator, Saw Chit Mike Mike M&E officer, Naw Lar Eh	Tha Kha Peace and Security Initiative (TKPSI)	Dawei, Tanintharyi
9 March	TVET training participants from MAV and TKPSI <b>2 Male and 3 Female</b>	TKPSI and MAV	Bago and Dawei, Tanintharyi
10 March	<b>2 Male and 1 Female</b>	RPF and MNHC	Mawlamyine, Mon State

## Annex 4: Evaluation Question Matrix

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions	Data sources	Data collection methods	Stakeholders/Informants	Analysis and assessment
<b>Relevance and validity of design</b>	Is the project still relevant to beneficiaries', global, country, ILO and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, considering the changes in circumstances (the 2021 coup d'état)? What is the relevance of the project as perceived by the local population and beneficiaries?	Project Document, Project Progress Reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews	All stakeholders	Qualitative, triangulation, coding
	How has the project responded flexibly to changing circumstances over time? Did the project address the major causes of vulnerability and respond to livelihood & employment issues among remittance-dependent communities, including women and youth?	Project Document, Project Progress Reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews	ESPs, VDCs, CCs, workers, TVET providers, TVET trainees	Qualitative, triangulation, coding
	Are the stated goals, objectives and outputs relevant to issues (and their effects) that are central to the situation of pandemic and ongoing conflict and fragility? Was there a measurable relationship between project outputs e.g. cash into communities, and project outcomes?	Project Document, Project Progress Reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews	ILO Project staff, EAO, ESPs, VDCs, CCs, workers, TVET providers, TVET trainees	Qualitative, triangulation, coding

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Evaluation Questions</b>	<b>Data sources</b>	<b>Data collection methods</b>	<b>Stakeholders/Informants</b>	<b>Analysis and assessment</b>
<b>Coherence</b>	To what extent did other interventions and policies support or undermine the project interventions, and vice versa?	Project Document, Project Progress Reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews	ILO Project staff, EAO, ESPs, VDCs, CCs, workers, TVET providers,	Qualitative, triangulation, coding
	Was the project consistent with or influential to ILO national, regional and global strategic priorities and programming on labour migration, social protection and skills development, and make effective use of its comparative advantages?	Project Document, progress reports, M&E data	Document review	ILO project staff	mixed methods
	To what extent there is synergies and interlinkages between the project interventions and other interventions carried out by the ILO-Yangon office, the government, EAOs, ESPs, CSOs and social partners?	Project Document, Project Progress Reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews	ILO Project staff, EAO, ESPs, VDCs, TVET providers	qualitative, triangulation
	How the project adds value in relation to others and how duplication of effort is avoided?	Project Document, Project Progress Reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews	ILO Project staff, EAO, ESPs	qualitative
<b>Efficiency</b>	Given the size of the project, its complexity and challenges under Covid-19 as well as the political instability in Myanmar, have the existing management structure and technical capacity been sufficient	progress reports, financial reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews	ILO Project staff	mixed methods

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Evaluation Questions</b>	<b>Data sources</b>	<b>Data collection methods</b>	<b>Stakeholders/Informants</b>	<b>Analysis and assessment</b>
	and adequate? To what extent the project received political support to navigate local political and security challenges?				
	Has the project been receiving adequate political, technical and administrative support from the ILO and its partners? If not, why? How did the project address this?	progress reports, financial reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews	ILO Project staff	mixed methods
	Was the projects use of resources optimal for achieving its intended results (financial, human, institutional and technical, etc.)? Were activities completed on-time/according to work plans? Was the funding and timeframe sufficient to achieve the intended outcomes?	progress reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews	ILO Project staff	mixed methods
	Which project activities represented the greatest value for money in terms of achieving objectives and outputs of the project?	progress reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews	ILO Project staff	qualitative, triangulation
	Were cost-sharing arrangements or in-kind contributions sought from partners to complement the project's resources (from other ILO projects, inter-agency initiatives, cooperation with tripartite	Project document and progress reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews	ILO Project staff, ESPs,	qualitative, triangulation

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions	Data sources	Data collection methods	Stakeholders/Informants	Analysis and assessment
	constituents and CSO partners, etc.)? Which were the most effective for leveraging project resources?				
	What was the impact of the major challenges/risks that affected programme efficiency and performance (incl. those related to COVID-19 and the February '21 coup)? How did the project manage those challenges/risks to continue delivering impact?	Project document and progress reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews	ILO Project staff	qualitative, triangulation
<b>Effectiveness</b>	<p>To what extent did the project achieve the targets set forth in its logical diagram and results framework? What were the internal and external factors that influenced achievements or non-achievements of results (including but not limited to management, human resources, financial aspects, regulatory aspects, implementation modifications or deviation from plans)?</p> <p>How did the project respond to changing context, particularly the political upheaval, and conflict, and how effective were the responses in</p>	progress reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews	ILO Project staff, EAO, ESPs, VDCs, community contractors, beneficiaries, TVET providers, TVET trainees	mixed methods

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions	Data sources	Data collection methods	Stakeholders/Informants	Analysis and assessment
	maintaining safety and delivering results?				
	<p>Has an effective Risk Analysis and a Monitoring, Evaluation (M&amp;E) and Reporting system been established and implemented, including the regular/periodic meetings among project staff and with the beneficiary, donor and key partners?</p> <p>Are those systems effective to aid result-based management and to ensure expected results of the project? To what extent the M&amp;E and reporting system is able to collect and use disaggregated data by sex, by age (youth), people with disabilities, and age (and other categories that the project has identified)?</p>	project documents, progress reports, M&E data	Document review and stakeholder interviews	ILO Project staff, EAO, ESPs, VDCs, community contractors, beneficiaries, TVET providers, TVET trainees	mixed methods

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions	Data sources	Data collection methods	Stakeholders/Informants	Analysis and assessment
	Were management and governance structures effective – from implementation to donor/ILO meetings? Was technical backstopping sought and received from specialists when needed, and were arrangements effective? How effective is communication between the different actors involved, including between the ILO and EAOs, Village development committees, civil society partners etc?	project documents, progress reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews	ILO Project staff, EAO, ESPs, VDCs, community contractors, beneficiaries, TVET providers, TVET trainees	qualitative, triangulation
	Were local communities or affected populations involved in monitoring activities, including marginalised groups such as women, youth, people with disabilities (PWDs)?	project documents, progress reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews	ESPs, VDCs, community contractors, beneficiaries,	qualitative, triangulation
	Were the monitoring tools and resources adapted to meet real-time needs on the ground, if needed?				qualitative, triangulation

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Evaluation Questions</b>	<b>Data sources</b>	<b>Data collection methods</b>	<b>Stakeholders/Informants</b>	<b>Analysis and assessment</b>
<b>Project impact and sustainability of project benefits</b>	What were the most significant negative or positive, intended or unintended, effects on the life of the ultimate project beneficiaries so far? How did the project interventions address the immediate economic shocks of COVID-19 among selected remittance-dependent communities in Karen and Mon State?	project documents, progress reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews	ILO Project staff, EAO, ESPs, VDCs, community contractors, beneficiaries, TVET providers, TVET trainees	qualitative, triangulation
	Was there any evidence that the results of the intervention may have a positive contribution to the relevant SDGs and targets (explicitly or implicitly)?	project documents, progress reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews, online survey	TVET providers and TVET trainees	mixed methods
	Was there a sustainability strategy/plan for the project? Is the strategy effective and realistic taking into consideration potential changes in the country due to the COVID 19 pandemic? Were there any gaps in the sustainability strategy/plan and how these could be addressed by the stakeholders, including other ILO-Yangon office and other ILO projects?	project documents, progress reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews, online survey	VDC, CCs, Village Infrastructure Operation and Maintenance Committees (VIOMCs)	mixed methods
	Which project benefits show evidence that they will likely continue after external funding is discontinued?	project documents, progress reports	Document review and stakeholder	VDC, CCs, Village Infrastructure Operation and Maintenance Committees (VIOMCs)	mixed methods



<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Evaluation Questions</b>	<b>Data sources</b>	<b>Data collection methods</b>	<b>Stakeholders/Informants</b>	<b>Analysis and assessment</b>
			interviews, online survey		
	Did the trainings conducted in areas where trainees are/will be later able to generate increased income?	project documents, progress reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews, online survey	TVET providers, TVET trainees	mixed methods
	Any evidence that operational maintenance committees tasked with infrastructure maintenance are completing this work as required?	project documents, progress reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews, online survey	Village Infrastructure Operation and Maintenance Committees (VIOMCs)	mixed methods
<b>Gender and other Cross Cutting issues including COVID</b>	Was the Gender Framework of the project relevant and effective? Which factors influenced its implementation and achievement or non-achievements of gender related targets?	Project document	document review	ESPs, VDCs, CCs, Beneficiaries	qualitative
	To what extent was the project successful in increasing decision-making and employment opportunities for women in rural infrastructure works?	progress reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews, online survey	ESPs, VDCs, CCs, Beneficiaries	mixed methods
	To what extent was the project successful in promoting the development of gender responsive infrastructure that meets the needs	progress reports	Document review and stakeholder interviews, online survey	ESPs, VDCs, CCs, Beneficiaries	mixed methods

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions	Data sources	Data collection methods	Stakeholders/Informants	Analysis and assessment
	of all end users – women and men, and people with disabilities?				
	How well has the programme integrated environmental concerns and disaster risk reduction into its initiatives?	progress reports	document review and stakeholder interviews	ILO Project staff, ESPs, VDCs, community contractors, beneficiaries, TVET providers, TVET trainees	qualitative, triangulation

## Annex 5: Lessons Learned

**Project DC/SYMBOL: MMR/20/02/NZL**

**Name of Evaluator: Frances Barns**

**Date: 31 March 2023**

*The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.*

<b>LESSON LEARNED ELEMENT</b>	<b>Programming Approach</b>
<b>Brief description of lessons learned</b> (link to specific action or task)	An approach to programming that combines community consultation systems promoting equal opportunities for participation among beneficiaries with clear and detailed procedures, adequate technical and normative training and full transparency on finances can be effective in garnering the ownership and commitment of villagers.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	The approach requires a project team with the right administrative skills, understanding of context and commitment to working collaboratively.
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	Village Community Members
<b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b>	The timeframe and remote modality of the evaluation did not allow for extensive in-depth probing of community members views, for example, to identify if there was any contestation over the selection of projects. The engagement of local researchers, dividing community members into different groups based on socio-economic characteristics (age, sex, ethnicity etc) and allowing more time for data collection may be helpful in this regard.
<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	A detailed procedures manual for all processes, well designed training programs, effective ILO staff to conduct consultations and delivery training, public display of project finances are needed.
<b>ILO Administrative Issues</b> (staff, resources, design, implementation)	High quality recruitment practices are required to recruit the right staff to facilitate the above processes. Sufficient numbers of staff are also needed to oversee and monitor.

<b>LESSON LEARNED ELEMENT</b>	<b>Entry Point</b>
<b>Brief description of lessons learned</b> (link to specific action or task)	It is possible for Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAO) to move beyond being rebel forces towards becoming administrations capable of decentralised service delivery and public revenue generation even in a context of political instability. By supporting them donors may be able to protect against a collapse of governance during a complex emergency.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	Specific EAOs have a commitment to service delivery, have some access to sources of revenue, and management systems that are developed to some degree.
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	Ethnic Armed Organisations, Communities in EAO areas.
<b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b>	EAOs are varyingly constrained by lack of access to resources, attacks from the Tatmadaw. For example, the Karen National Army has been embroiled in conflict with the Tatmadaw but the New Mon State Party has emphasised its commitment to the National Ceasefire Agreement and has remained more peaceful.
<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	Involving EAOs in development assistance project management can help to strengthen their capacity as administrators. A longer term engagement, as has been in place between the ILO and the NMSP, allows for a phased approach allowing for increased engagement in and responsibility for project management over time.
<b>ILO Administrative Issues</b> (staff, resources, design, implementation)	This lesson learned should guide project design in regarding to involving EAOs in overall project management (eg Steering Committee) and providing capacity development support for governance and service delivery

<b>LESSON LEARNED ELEMENT</b>	<b>Entry Point</b>
<b>Brief description of lessons learned</b> (link to specific action or task)	Collaborating with Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs) is an effective way for a humanitarian/ development partners to access communities in hard to reach areas, cut off from Government support. Doing so does not need to imply that the development agency is aligned politically with the EAO.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	Different EAOs have different capacity and attitudes to collaborating with outside agencies. Development agencies need to collaborate with EAOs with the right skills and orientation.
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	Ethnic Armed Organisations, Communities in EAO areas.
<b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b>	Conflict and attacked by the Tatmadaw can preclude development partners operating in certain geographic locations where EAOs are located.
<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	Depending on various factors, including whether specific EAOs have committed to the National Ceasefire Agreement, some EAO areas may be relatively stable.
<b>ILO Administrative Issues</b> (staff, resources, design, implementation)	This lesson learned should guide project design in regarding to the geographic focus of projects, the structure of Project Steering Committees and components supporting capacity building of EAOs.

<b>LESSON LEARNED ELEMENT</b>	<b>Entry Point</b>
<b>Brief description of lessons learned</b> (link to specific action or task)	TVET training is a useful entry point for development partners due to its increased importance in livelihood strategies in post 2021 Coup Myanmar with constraints on agricultural trade and increase in demand for local services due to constraints on movement between villages and town and across the country. TVET training programs should be of sufficient duration, quality and linked to an understanding of service demand locally, regionally and in ASEAN.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	CSOs need to have sufficient capacity to deliver services
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	CSOs, Community members particularly young people
<b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b>	Conflict and attacked by the Tatmadaw can preclude villagers access to towns to participate in TVET training. Online training is not preferred due to cost and availability of connectivity. Mobile training may be an option. Support for the purchase of data could be considered. CSO registration is an issue in regard to Do No Harm principles.
<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	The evaluation found a high level of enthusiasm among respondents for TVET training for the reasons outlined under the description of this lesson.
<b>ILO Administrative Issues</b> (staff, resources, design, implementation)	The ILO should consider the cost of security for CSOs, the continuation of programs and maintenance of equipment post support and ensuring course modules link with national and regional skills and qualifications frameworks

<b>LESSON LEARNED ELEMENT</b>	<b>Partnerships</b>
<b>Brief description of lessons learned</b> (link to specific action or task)	In Post-Coup 2021 Myanmar, CSOs have an important political role in spearheading advocacy for democratic principles and systems and a presence on the ground. Collaborating with them is one way development partners can meet their program goals. However, care must be taken to ensure Do No Harm/conflict sensitivity principles are adhered to, in light of the dangers to CSO staff of the Tatmadaw's campaign to undermine them.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	Large numbers of CSOs are operating in Myanmar and many are strongly committed to combating the Military Government.
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	CSOs. Citizens.
<b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b>	On October 28, 2022, a new, restrictive Organization Registration Law, regulating both domestic and international NGOs, was promulgated with criminal sanctions for civil society activity following the expiration of the previous law in late 2021.
<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	Numerous CSOs are operational and in the field in regions in Myanmar subject to conflict and hard to access.
<b>ILO Administrative Issues</b> (staff, resources, design, implementation)	Consider the capacity of CSOs in terms of managing grants received (eg M&E), consider the costs of security to ensure Do No Harm/conflict sensitivity.

## Annex 6: Emerging Good Practices

**Project DC/SYMBOL: MMR/20/02/NZL**

**Name of Evaluator: Frances Barns**

**Date: 31 March 2023**

*The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.*

<b>GOOD PRACTICE ELEMENT</b>	<b>Collaboration with Ethnic Armed Organisations</b>
<b>Brief summary of the good practice</b> (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	Involving the Ethnic Armed Organisation in project leadership (eg through representation on the PSC) can help to facilitate sustainability of project outputs such as infrastructure (education and health centres) and at the same time support EAO capacity development
<b>Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	Some EAOs have better management systems and are better set up for revenue raising than others. Some EAOs operate in more stable conditions than others. This will affect replicability.
<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	In Mon State in 2020-2022, the ILO involved the New Mon State Party in its steering committee. Essential staff, materials and equipment were supplied, albeit to a limited degree, to ILO built health and education facilities.
<b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b>	Availability of staff, material and equipment in health and education facilities. EAOs, service deliverers (teachers and health practitioners), village community members.
<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	ILO, UN, other development partners
<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals</b> (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	UN Strategic Emergency and Rehabilitation Response Plan (UN SERRP)
<b>Other documents or relevant comments</b>	

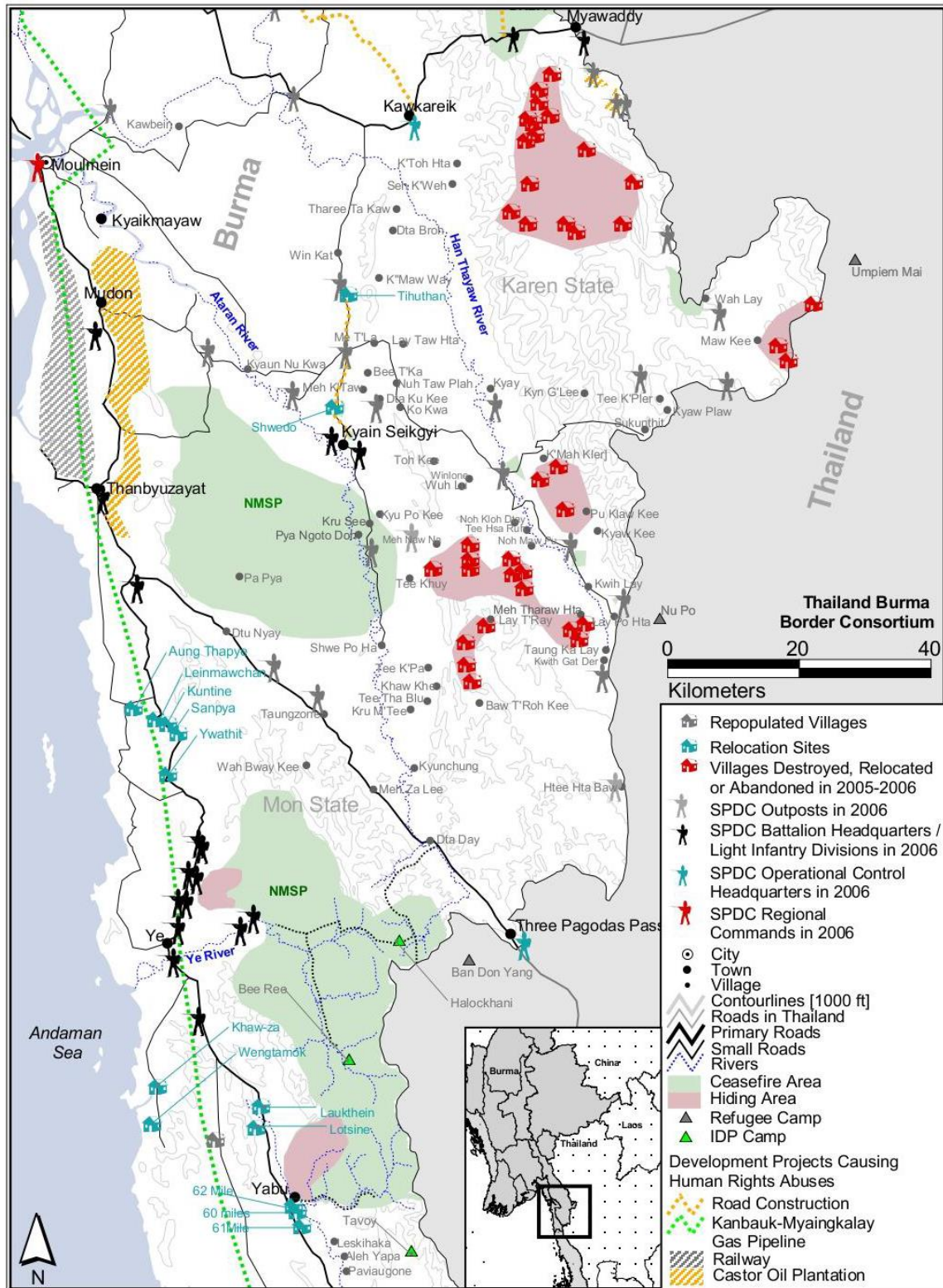


## Annex 7: References

- Evaluation of More and Quality Jobs are Created through Better Policies and Frameworks and Strengthened Labour Market Information System
- ILO Grant Contribution Minute
- Construction Contract Agreement between Ethnic Service Provider and Community Contractors
- ILO Report: Covid-19 Impact on Migrant Workers and Country Response in Myanmar
- Implement Agreement between ILO and Covenant Development Institute
- Minute Agreement Regarding Agreement with the Donor
- Implementation Agreement between ILO and Rahmayana Peace Foundation and Amendment 1 and 2 and Minute regarding direct selection of RPF and change of bank account
- Implementation Agreement between ILO and RPF regarding training
- Myanmar DWCP 2018-2022
- Organogram
- Covenant Institute Monthly Progress Report
- Covenant Institute Monthly Report Feb – December 2021
- Covenant Institute Monthly Report January 2022
- Case Studies Naw Nee Doh Wal and Saw Has Mei Htaw
- Covenant Institute Risk Assessment
- Mid Term Review Report
- Summary of Training Graduates
- Curriculum Development Report
- TVET Impact Evaluation Report
- Assessment of Training Needs Report
- First (Sept 2020 – March 2021), Second (April 2021 – Sept 2021), Third (Oct 2021 – Feb 2022) Report and Fourth (16 Feb – 15 August 2022) and Fourth (September 2022- March 2023) to the Donor
- Operation Procedure Manual
- Infrastructure data and major achievement information until Dec 2022
- ILO Myanmar Decent Work Country Programme

## Annex 8: Maps of Project Area

### Map of Community Based Infrastructure



Map showing beneficiaries of TVET Activities.

