

# Social Infrastructure Programme in the Southeast of Myanmar

Embassy of Switzerland, Swiss Cooperation Office Myanmar



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
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Swiss Agency for Development  
and Cooperation SDC

## Seven Years of building better Social Infrastructures and stronger Communities in the Southeast of Myanmar



**Between 2011 and 2018, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation's Humanitarian Aid (SDC/HA) contributed to the improvement of lives of people affected by poverty and conflict in the Southeast of Myanmar by creating favourable conditions for trust building between the parties in the Myanmar peace process.**

The objectives of infrastructure programmes in Mon and Kayin States were:

- 1) enhancement of the learning environment of children,
- 2) access to basic health care, water and sanitation facilities,
- 3) improved knowledge of maintenance, hygiene, disaster preparedness and waste management for teachers, students and community committees.

Priorities of the interventions were set through consultation processes with the respective communities. They were closely coordinated with the local authorities and other actors. During the project duration SDC/HA supported selected communities with new/rehabilitated primary schools or rural sub health centres, kindergartens, teacher houses, roads, bridges, revetment walls, water supplies and

culverts. The programme included capacity building trainings related to community development and management and maintenance of the buildings.

The interventions in the Southeast started in 2011 and were based on previous experiences of SDC/HA in the Ayeyarwady Delta after cyclone Nargis. The allocated budget for the programme, running from 2011 to 2018, is USD 13.5 million.

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### Myanmar – a country undergoing rapid changes

Myanmar is currently undergoing significant change in different domains. The economy has opened up to the world, sanctions are being lifted, and there has been a political transition towards democratic governance. After its landslide victory in the elections of November 2015, the NLD party formed the new government in April 2016. Further, the 21st Century Panglong Conference (August 2016) has been important for the political dialogue aimed finding a lasting peace for Myanmar's decade-old internal conflicts between the central power and ethnic armed groups.

Decades of internal armed conflict in the Southeast have left many people displaced with a large number seeking refuge and employment in Thailand. Most of the territory along the Myanmar-Thai border is administrated by Non-State Armed Groups. As access was very limited, social services and basic infrastructures such as school buildings, health centres, roads and bridges are very scarce in rural Mon and Kayin States.

SDC/HA's activities contributed to build trust amongst ethnic communities, authorities and Non-State Armed Groups. Thanks to a conflict-sensitive community-led approach they indirectly supported the consolidation of the ongoing peace process in Myanmar.

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## Development of Rural Communities

In order to enhance sustainable development through community ownership and local governance the SDC/HA programmes combined the construction of community infrastructure with training and capacity building of community-based organizations (CBOs). This included social, financial and management as well as maintenance skills training for the respective buildings. Villagers provided local material, participated actively in construction work and were sensitized by the SDC/HA team to potential changes and benefits for their village.



A Village Development Committee is trained on their mapping needs and resources in their village © Aung Htay Hlaing for SDC/HA

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## Project at glance

### Duration and total Budget

Project	Duration	Total Budget
SDC	15.11.2010-31.12.2013	CHF 2,500,000
SE I (SDC)+SIRP I	01.09.2013-14.08.2017	CHF 4,730,000
UNICEF+SDC	01.01.2013-31.08.2017	CHF 3,080,000
SE II (SDC)	01.10.2016-31.12.2018	CHF 2,660,000
SIRP II	01.10.2016-30.09.2019	CHF 580,000

### Three Social Infrastructure Programmes

To reach the threefold objectives mentioned above, SDC/HA has chosen three different implementing modalities for the programmes. Generally SDC/HA equipped the buildings with basic furniture and provided sanitation facilities including a well to ensure access to safe drinking water. After handing over the facilities the responsibility for operation and maintenance now lies with the communities and the respective authorities.

#### *Primary Schools and Rural Sub Health Centres (SDC own funding)*

Since 2011, 90 primary schools, 18 rural health sub-centres and 24 infrastructure projects (such as water supply, culverts and incinerators) have been newly constructed or rehabilitated. They were handed over to the communities under a formal agreement with the representing authority of the Union Government and with the agreement of the Non-State Armed Groups. Building on the success and lessons learnt, SDC/HA increased the focus on the

sustainability of SDC's built infrastructures through CBO strengthening trainings and improve living conditions through CBO self-initiated infrastructure projects in 86 targeted villages during 2016 to 2018. Recently, local solid waste incinerators were being built by CBOs

#### *Governmental Schools funded by Unicef and SDC*

In a partnership between Unicef and SDC/HA started in 2013 to 2017, SDC/HA has built 30 Primary Schools, 4 kindergartens and renovated 3 schools. Under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, these schools enable young students to access state-run higher education.

#### *Southeast Infrastructure Rehabilitation Project (SIRP)*

The first phase of SIRP-programme was funded by the European Union (EuropeAid), SDC and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). It was implemented by a consortium of 5 partners (NRC, Knowledge and Dedication for Nation-Building, Action Aid Myanmar and SDC) between 2013 to 2016. The programme identified and trained young potential leaders (fellows) from local communities in analytical and communication skills. These young leaders together with the village conducted needs assessment and elaborated a village development plan.



Hand Washing at School in Mon State © Aung Htay Hlaing for SDC/HA

Based on the village development plan, SDC supported 29 villages in Mon State in the realisation of 92 infrastructure projects such as roads, bridges, water supply, school construction or rehabilitations and rural health sub-centres. The second phase of SIRP-programme (SIRP II) between 2016 and 2019 is funded by SDC and implemented by Action Aid Myanmar for economic and social development of vulnerable communities by strengthening the capacity of fellows and local authorities in governance in 59 villages in Mon and Kayin States.

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## IMPRESSUM

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