

Food and Nutrition Security in Rakhine State

Project Name	Food and Nutrition Security in Rakhine State Myanmar	1 NO POVERTY	2 ZERO HUNGER	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
Commissioned by	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	5 GENDER EQUALITY	6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	13 CLIMATE ACTION
Project Region	Townships in North and Central Rakhine	Sustainable Development Goals		
Project Partners	International and National NGOs, Local CSOs			
Duration and Budget	2016–2026, with a budget of up to € 17.9 million			

Background

Rakhine State, situated in western Myanmar and bordering Bangladesh, remains one of the country's least developed regions, with high poverty rates. Around 50% of children under five year of age suffer from chronic malnutrition, which can lead to irreversible physical and cognitive impairments. Due to compounded factors of conflicts and natural disasters, over 2 million people are at risk of severe malnutrition.

Opportunities and Challenges

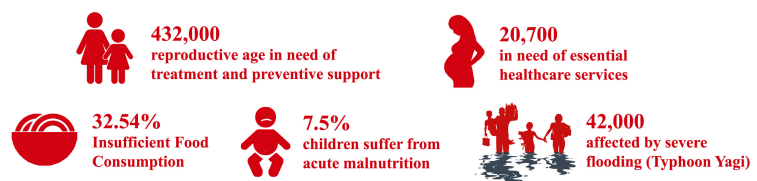
Food insecurity and malnutrition continue to severely impact vulnerable populations in rural Rakhine State, particularly women and children. High malnutrition rates and child mortality are persistent issues. Key contributing factors include poor dietary diversity, inadequate hygiene, and limited access to essential health services. Additionally, the region faces challenges such as limited income opportunities, restricted market access, frequent natural disasters, and ongoing political instability hindering food and nutrition security.

Early childhood nutrition, especially within the **first 1,000 days** (from conception to age two), is critical for long-term cognitive development, educational success, future earning potential, and overall health. Malnutrition during this period can lead to irreversible health issues and increase the risk of premature death. Hence, improving the nutritional status of adolescent girls, women, and young children is crucial for sustainable national development. Better nutrition supports intellectual capacity, boosts economic productivity, and reduces the prevalence of non-communicable diseases within the affected communities.

Objective

Aligned with the German government's Strategy on Transitional Development Assistance (TDA), the project aims to **enhance dietary and hygiene practices in selected regions of Rakhine State, particularly among women aged 15 to 49 and children between 6 and 23 months.**

The project prioritizes women's needs by incorporating gender-responsive approaches to improve their overall nutritional and economic well-being. In the aftermath of Cyclone Mocha, the initiative supports a "green" recovery, leading to climate-resilient food production and water infrastructure in local communities.



Approach

The project addresses the complex causes of malnutrition in Rakhine State by prioritising women's needs, promoting climate awareness, and implementing a multi-dimensional approach. To ensure comprehensive impact, the project combines nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific interventions across important areas, including: Nutrition and Health, Agriculture, Sustainable Aquaculture, Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), and Climate Change Adaptation.

The project is further elaborating synergies between the interlinked areas:

- Increased access to safe aquatic proteins, enhancing nutritional outcomes, particularly during the critical early years (the 1,000-day approach).
- Improve food availability and nutrition security by processing and adding value, which also generates higher incomes.

The project is implemented in collaboration with both national and international partners, and local CSOs, including such as Youth and Community Development Network (YCDN), Relief International (RI), etc. Additionally, a network of volunteers has been established in various ethnic villages within the implementation areas. These volunteers play a critical role in supporting on-the-ground efforts and facilitating swift responses to emerging needs.

Key Activities

The project focuses on **147 villages** across **Sittwe, Kyauktaw, Thandwe and Pauktaw** Townships, and other areas in Rakhine State, reaching a total population of approximately **200,000** people. It specifically targets around **35,000** women of reproductive age (15–49 years) and **12,000** children under two years old. The project activities encompass five interlinked areas:



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Health and Nutrition

Improving the access to and quality of advisory services regarding nutrition-relevant basic health services by constructing and renovating sub-rural health centers, strengthening the skills of health advisory actors in the sector, and contributing to health, nutrition, and hygiene awareness campaigns to the communities. Disease prevention activities include installing community handwashing stations and distributing IEC materials in the project villages.

Agriculture

Increasing the diversity of food production in the target areas by providing technical advice and agricultural inputs to support the cultivation and utilization of nutrient-rich vegetables and fruits in home gardens. It also includes facilitating processing and cooking demonstrations for women to promote knowledge of nutritious and safe food items, including fish, through nutrition awareness sessions.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)

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

Sustainable Aquaculture

Aiming at poverty reduction and improving the nutritional status of the local population through increasing sustainable aquaculture, by building the capacity of local small-scale fish farmers (SFF) and processors on the best production methods, post-harvest handling, and processing of aquaculture products.

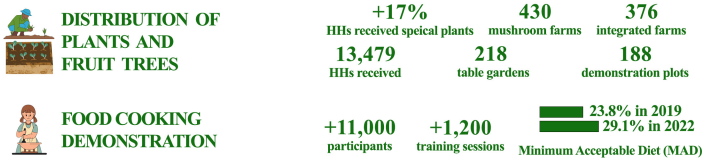
Adaptation to Climate Change

Enhancing climate resilience among farmers and their communities by implementing effective climate adaptation strategies and establishing inclusive disaster risk management systems at the village level, thereby improving preparedness and response to climate-related challenges.

Health and Nutrition: Achievements



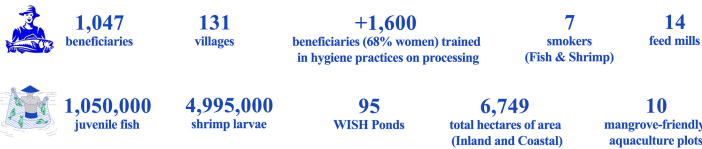
Agriculture: Achievements



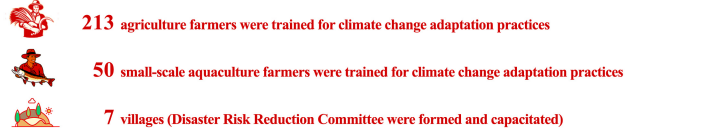
Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH): Achievements



Sustainable Aquaculture: Achievements



Adaptation to Climate Change: Achievements



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