

FOOD SECURITY POLICY PROJECT

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**Submitted in behalf of Michigan State University
by**

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Executive Summary

The USAID Burma Food Security Policy Project began its first year of operations in September 2014. The project is led by Michigan State University (MSU), in partnership with Myanmar Centre for Economic and Social Development (CESD), and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). The overall project goal is to promote inclusive agricultural productivity growth. This will be achieved by meeting two integrated objectives:

Objective 1: Address critical evidence gaps for informed policy debate and formulation.

Objective 2: Foster credible, inclusive, transparent, and sustainable policy processes

The project is comprised of four components, which integrate primary research, evidence based policy advocacy, and building research and policy capacity among national partners: **Component 1:** Policy/strategy advising; **Component 2:** Agrifood value chains; **Component 3:** Household and community livelihoods; and **Component 4:** Capacity and network building

The November 2015 elections and subsequent installation of a new government at the beginning of April 2016 provided important opportunities for the project. The USAID AOR and the Nathan Associates team provided valuable guidance and mutual support to enhance project effectiveness. Major activities completed under each component during Year 2 of the project include the following:

1. **Policy/strategy advising:**

Findings from project research studies have fed directly into the design of the government's new agricultural policy and agricultural development strategy. The FSPP team contributed to an agricultural strategy white paper led by former NESAC Chair Tin Htut Oo, Nathan Associates and USAID Burma staff. The team participated in multiple outreach events to NLD leadership and provided comments on government draft policy and strategy documents. Key policy messages have been adopted in current draft policy and strategy documents. The next challenge will be to translate them into public investment re-allocation and implementation on the ground.

FSPP proposed the formation of an agricultural policy unit in the Department of Planning of the new Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MOALI). The Minister accepted the proposal and the new unit is currently being staffed up. The FSPP Chief of Party was approved by the Minister as an international advisor to the unit. He has provided policy advice on a number of questions, including options to address the current slump in paddy prices.

2. **Agrifood value chains:**

The project completed analysis and conducted outreach on two studies initiated in FY15 to identify opportunities and constraints to agricultural sector growth. The first was a study of the fish value chain in the Delta (Yangon, Ayeyarwaddy and Bago) region of Burma. The report established that, over the last decade, rapid and sustained growth of aquaculture enterprises has occurred, relatively unfettered by official restrictions on land

use, in response to domestic market opportunities. Rapid technical change has occurred, resulting in widespread productivity increases, and large and growing numbers of small and medium producers have entered production, engaging in commercial enterprises, especially nurseries which supply larger operations with seed, as well as in subsistence-oriented extensive fish production in 'backyard ponds'. The assessment provided a set of policy recommendations, which included prioritizing support for development of small and moderately sized commercial producers over very large farms, supporting the production of a variety of additional fish species that can be farmed commercially on a relatively small-scale to meet demand from middle class and low income consumers. Small farms can also provide points of entry into aquaculture value chains for new producers and associated service providers and removal of all restrictions on the domestic transport of fish.

3. Household and community livelihoods:

To support decentralized approaches to agricultural and rural economic development in Burma the project completed an analysis of constraints and opportunities for Mon State based on a rural livelihoods survey of 1640 households. The survey investigated how different types of rural households derive and utilize their incomes, as well as their exposure to risk, and links between the farm and non-farm economies. The survey questionnaire covered a broad range of issues pertinent to the analysis of rural livelihoods, including household consumption and assets, farm enterprise budgets, non-farm employment, migration, transfers and savings, health and education, access to public services and credit, subjective wellbeing, dietary diversity, and shocks. Results from the survey were published in two reports and presented to the Mon State government (Chief Minister, cabinet ministers and parliamentarians), as well as to donors and civil society. The study identified options for agricultural diversification and increasing agricultural productivity to reduce dependence on international migration.

A new study on the rural economy in Yangon and Ayeyawaddy Divisions was undertaken with 1102 households in areas with and without aquaculture. Preliminary analysis finds increases in rural wages, associated with migration, driving rapid mechanization of labor intensive tasks such as harvesting paddy. Increases in the adoption of yield enhancing technologies (e.g. improved varieties, fertilizer) is occurring more slowly. Expansion of mechanized transport services indicates that connectivity Yangon and adjacent rural areas has grown considerably.

4. Capacity and network building:

FSP delivered a variety of training and capacity building activities related to agricultural and rural development, both theoretical and practical. CESD research staff gained extensive practical experience of conducting household livelihood and rural economy studies. This featured an immersive program of guided learning by doing, with activities including survey design, pre-testing, translation, training for trainers, enumerator supervision and logistical support, as well as the use of STATA software to enable data cleaning and analysis. This training and its direct practical application represents an extremely valuable addition to the skillset of researchers involved. To build leadership skills and improve English language ability the CESD team studied "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" by Steven Covey using a weekly seminar discussion format with a different CESD team member as discussion facilitator each week.

1. Introduction

1.1 Project objectives

The overall goal of the Food Security Policy Project (FSPP) is to promote inclusive agricultural productivity growth, improved nutritional outcomes, and enhanced livelihood resilience for men and women through an improved policy enabling environment. Taking a broad view of agriculture, including the farm and off-farm parts of the food system, this goal will be achieved through increased capacity to generate policy-relevant evidence and gender-sensitive analysis that is used by stakeholders throughout the food system to improve policy formulation and implementation. This goal is to be achieved by two integrated objectives:

Objective 1: To address critical evidence gaps for informed policy debate and formulation. The Project will generate, synthesize, and disseminate new knowledge on targeted policy issues for which the current evidence base is insufficient, and thus facilitate and encourage reforms.

Objective 2: To foster credible, inclusive, transparent, and sustainable policy processes in Burma. The Project will strengthen the building blocks for Burmese national and state/region policy systems, promote inclusion of and dialogue among all stakeholders around critical policy issues, and disseminate globally sourced examples of successful innovation and best practice in policy system capacity building.

The project is comprised of an integrated set of four components that feed into these two objectives:

Component 1: Policy/strategy advising. This component is responsible for consulting with stakeholders and getting a sense of policy issues, doing outreach from research results to policy audiences, and conducting policy analysis.

Component 2: Agrifood value chains (AFVCs). This component is responsible learning about AFVCs and the specific issues faced by each one in terms of the field research and analysis, outreach of the study results, policy advising from the results, and capacity building for doing similar work.

Component 3: Household and communities livelihoods. This has the same set of responsibilities as the second component, but for its study area.

Component 4: Capacity and network building. This component funnels, cross-fertilizes, documents, and organizes the capacity building actions of the other three components. This is so other institutions interface with the project in a continuous way and builds to a body of imparted method and approach.

1.2 Project partners and staffing

FSPP is implemented by Michigan State University (MSU), in partnership with Centre for Economic and Social Development (CESD) in Burma, and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Washington D.C., USA.

For MSU, Duncan Boughton (Professor, International Development), is Chief of Party for FSPP, living in Burma fulltime from January 2016. Ben Belton (Assistant Professor, International Development), is based in country fulltime, leading the project's research

activities. Ellen Payongayong (Survey Specialist) visits Myanmar regularly to lead household survey and data analysis training implementation activities. They are supported by a number of administrative and finance staff, including Steve Longabaugh (Specialist), who works closely staff of CESD to ensure that reporting standards are achieved.

For CESD, Zaw Oo (Executive Director CESD) leads the project, playing a key role in facilitating the delivery research findings and policy recommendations to policy makers at the highest level. The research component of the FSPP project is led by Aung Hein (Research Coordinator), who heads a team of six research associates and two research assistants to implement research activities and data analysis. The policy component is led by Ngu Wah Win (Policy Coordinator). They are supported by a team of four administrative and financial staff. CESD is now independently registered with a Board of Directors chaired by Tin Htut Oo.

For IFPRI, the project is led by Paul Dorosh (Division Director, Development Strategy and Governance) who leads on policy strategy guidance issues. He is supported by Mateusz Filipski (Research Fellow) and a team of researchers and research assistants who provide technical backstopping and training on data collection and analysis for CESD researchers, and engage in data collection and analysis and research planning activities.

1.3 Work plan summary

A revised two year work plan for 2015 was submitted to and approved by USAID in Q2 of 2015. In line with the project objectives and components summarized in Section 1.1 above, project activities and outputs are organized around four main components:

- 1) Policy Engagement Tools
- 2) Evidence Generation
- 3) Outreach and Engagement
- 4) Capacity Building

Work plan highlights are summarized below, in line with each of these components. Due to the changing policy environment and priorities arising post-election, a number of activities planned in 2015 were modified. Explanations of these modifications are also provided below, where relevant:

Policy Engagement Tools: 1) At the state level, FSPP will develop a rural development strategy for Mon State based on a detailed understanding of rural livelihoods, their linkages to key commodity value chains and urban centers, and linkages between Mon State and the national and neighboring country economies. The proposed rural development strategy is designed to be an engagement tool to inform and bring together different groups of actors with an important stake in the growth of the rural economy. 2) At national level, FSPP will develop a framework for agricultural sector reforms (FASR) that will enable the agricultural sector to accelerate its contribution to economic growth, poverty reduction and food security. The FASR will be an engagement tool to inform key sets of actors involved in governance at national level. The FASR will heavily draw on evidence generated by FSPP research activities.

Changes made: Given the changing political climate, the planned FASR was revised in favor of a white paper on agricultural development strategy, led the National Economic and Social Advisory Committee (NESAC) and Nathan Associates.

Evidence Generation: Evidence generated by FSPP during the first two years will come from two integrated sets of activities: 1) a rural livelihoods survey in Mon State; 2) selected commodity value chain studies.

The objectives of the survey are:

- To identify income sources and their relative importance for different categories of rural households in Mon State
- To understand the extent of spatial variation in income sources
- To document levels and patterns of household expenditures;
- To understand sources of risk and constraints faced by different rural households to improving their incomes and food security; and
- To assess the business climate for rural and agribusiness enterprises

Detailed understanding of rural livelihoods is complemented by an understanding of the value chains that create or expand market opportunities. Four value chains of strategic importance, both nationally and in Mon State, have been identified for study. These are: Aquaculture, agricultural inputs (especially seed and mechanization services), horticulture (fruits and vegetables), and smallholder rubber. The scope of the value chains will be sub-national (broader than State but not necessarily national in scope). Each of the value chain studies will take account of cross-cutting concerns such as land use rights, financial services, technical and market information, and regulatory issues.

Changes made – Value chain studies in Mon State were downsized, and a large household survey, the Myanmar Aquaculture-Agriculture Survey was implemented in the Delta in four townships close to Yangon.

Outreach and Engagement: The aim of the engagement activities is to identify key stakeholders and key policy processes so that evidence generated from the surveys and analyses are effectively targeted to inform the design of policy change. The engagement strategy for FSPP is first to generate relevant and rigorous evidence for food security related policies, then to identify veto-players and advocacy coalitions, and then to help improve the policy capacity of the stakeholders in Myanmar and to effect changes in food security policies.

Capacity Building: One of the project's main purposes is to develop capacity among CESD staff and those of affiliated organizations. It is envisaged that CESD research and policy staff will participate in training and capacity building activities jointly, subject to their interest and availability, in order to ensure that policy and research staff have a broad grounding in both areas. It is anticipated that this will be achieved via three main sets of activities:

- Field based training and capacity building gained through directed "learning by doing"
- Classroom based training
- Exposure to research, policy and development institutions, and participation related events in Myanmar, the region and elsewhere.

Field based training and capacity building activities will take place as part of the Mon household survey and fish value chain studies. There will be a variety of classroom based training activities covering a range of applied, conceptual and technical areas relevant to research and policy activities. The project will seek to ensure that MDRI staff have the opportunity to actively participate in international conferences and workshops in relevant fields, as these arise, in order to provide research and policy staff with greater exposure to international research and policy experience.

2 Project Highlights 2016

Project highlights for 2016 are presented below, organized with reference to the four project components.

2.1 Policy strategy advising

Project staff contributed to policy strategy and advising activities. Details of some of the most significant activities are summarized below:

Duncan Boughton, Ben Belton and Aung Hein contributed to development of a USAID supported white paper on agriculture, led by Nathan Associates and the National Economic and Social Advisory Committee (NESAC), through participation at workshops and inputs on the draft. Duncan Boughton was member of the delegation that present the white paper, "From Rice Bowl to Food Basket: Three pillars for modernizing Myanmar's Agricultural and Food Sector" to the Minister for Agriculture. The strategy identifies important opportunities for broad-based and inclusive rural economic growth through smallholder diversification and intensification. Multiple presentations were made to government officials, private sector representatives and civil society at the national Economic Forum meetings in Yangon and NayPyiTaw, as well as several other important workshops and conferences. The white paper can be downloaded from

http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/fsp/burma/Myanmar_Agricultural_Reform_White_Paper_English.pdf.

The principles and policies set out in the Agriculture Strategy White Paper have had a significant impact on the development of both the new Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MOALI) draft agricultural policy and agricultural development strategy.

To assist MOALI in policy formulation and implementation the project proposed the creation of an agricultural policy unit within the Department of Planning. The unit was approved by MOALI and is currently being staffed up. MOALI also approved Dr. Duncan Boughton as an international advisor to the new unit.

CESD researchers gave presentations for LIFT fund board and USAID on key findings from the Myanmar Aquaculture-Agriculture Survey 2016 (MAAS), on mechanization, credit access and utilization, internal labor migration, and off-farm employment. Subsequently, Ben Belton was invited to participate in roundtable discussion on economic growth in Myanmar with DFID Director General, commenting on trends in on agricultural mechanization. Belton also made a presentation of MAAS findings on rural transformation

at a DFID Myanmar retreat on structural transformation and migration in Myanmar ([Rural Transformation in Ayeyarwady & Yangon: Emerging evidence](#)).

In order to rapidly disseminate key findings from analysis the MAAS dataset to users, a new series of publications ('research highlights') was established. Advanced drafts of six research highlights were circulated to donors. These are listed below. The first research highlights have been published online, with others to follow in Q1 of 2017. Hyperlinks are provided below.

- [The Myanmar Aquaculture-Agriculture Survey 2016](#)
- [Agricultural Mechanization and Structural Transformation in Myanmar's Ayeyarwady Delta](#).
- [Credit Access and Utilization in Agriculture And Aquaculture In The Ayeyarwady Delta](#)
- [Off-Farm Employment and The Transforming Rural Non-Farm Economy Around Yangon](#)

Q1 saw the release of a policy brief summarizing key findings from aquaculture value chain study, titled "A Quiet Revolution Emerging in the Fish farming Value Chain in Myanmar: Implications for National Food Security" (<http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/fsp/burma/index.htm#pb>) and full length report, titled "Aquaculture in Transition - value transformation fish and food security in Myanmar" (<http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/fsp/burma/index.htm#rr>). Both documents were circulated widely and presented at a dissemination workshop, several policy meetings in Myanmar and seminars at MSU and IFPRI in the USA.

Ben Belton (MSU) participated in a fishery policy brief write shop from April 4-7 in Pin Oo Lwin. The write shop was organized by Myanmar Fisheries Partnership (a newly formed coalition of government, non-government and private organizations working on fisheries issues in Myanmar), and resulted in production of 5 policy briefs in English and Myanmar. Dr. Belton led the team producing a policy brief on aquaculture, based on findings from USAID supported value chain scoping work. The briefs are available to download from this link: <https://myanmarbiodiversity.org/portfolio-items/marine-fisheries/>. Subsequently, Ben Belton (MSU) and Aung Hein (CESD) attended a meeting with senior officials of the Department of Fisheries in Nay Pyi Taw on May 26 to present five policy briefs on the future of fisheries and aquaculture in Myanmar as part of a panel comprised of members of Myanmar Fisheries Partnership.

2.2 Agricultural commodity value chain research

2.2.1 Fish Value Chain

Q1 marked the release of a report and policy brief presenting findings from in research on aquaculture value chains in Myanmar, completed during FY 2015. These findings were disseminated during a two week visit to the United States by Aung Hein and Kyan Htoo (CESD) and Ben Belton, through presentations at MSU and IFPRI. During this visit, the

team presented a poster at the Global Food Security conference at Cornell University, titled "You Can Have Your Rice and Eat Fish Too: Rice, fish, land use trade-offs and food security in Myanmar and Bangladesh" (http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/fsp/burma/GFS_Poster_06_10_15.pdf).

2.2.2 Myanmar Aquaculture-Agriculture Survey

The Myanmar Aquaculture-Agriculture Survey (MAAS) was the main evidence generation activity initiated during 2016. MAAS build on insights gained during the fish value chain survey, and was designed to generate data on the following areas:

- Fish and crop farm size
- Farm enterprise profitability
- Farm productivity (yields of fish and crops)
- Production technologies (farming methods)
- Access to and utilization of credit in aquaculture and agriculture
- Tenure conditions under which land used for aquaculture & agriculture is accessed
- Employment generation (extent and characteristics associated with aquaculture & agriculture)
- Labor migration to and from rural areas
- The scale of impact of aquaculture and agriculture on the rural economy (economic and employment "multipliers")
- Trends in number and types of different businesses in aquaculture and agriculture value chains over time, and shifts in wages, prices, labor migration etc.
- Characteristics, extent and patterns of change in use of agricultural machinery

Survey design and implementation: Preparations for MAAS began with a training workshop on sample design led by David Megill, former chief advisor to the Myanmar Department of Population on implementation of the national census. This led to the development of a protocol for selection of a sample population. A survey instrument was developed translated into Burmese during January. The instrument underwent intensive pre-testing, revision and retranslation during February, and was finalized in early March. Forty eight enumerators and data entry operators were selected by exam and interview from a pool of 220 applicants. Selected individuals received a 2.5 week residential training from CESD researchers. Enumerators began listing households in selected enumeration areas (EAs) in the final week of March to provide a sample frame from which to draw households for interview.

A total of 1102 households were surveyed, comprising a representative sample of the population of 40 village tracts in 4 townships of Ayeyarwady (Maubin, Nyaungdon) and Yangon (Twantay, Kayan), including both farm and non-farm households. These 4 townships have the highest concentrations of aquaculture in Myanmar. Within these townships the 25 village tracts with highest densities of fish ponds were selected using GIS analysis. Another 15 village tracts with little or no aquaculture (mainly paddy/pulses) were selected from a list prepared with the support from the General Administrative Department. Fifteen households were selected randomly for interview from each of 79 enumeration areas (EA). Survey rollout began on May 2, and was completed on schedule

by May 28. Data was entered in the field and data cleaning began immediately in preparation for analysis.

Data analysis:

An intensive phase of data analysis began in July during a writeshop in Pyin Oo Lwin. MSU and IFPRI staff worked closely with CESD researchers to complete first round of analysis. Huge improvements in CESD capacity for using STATA software for survey data analysis, and in learning concepts relating to the analysis of household surveys were made. Working in pairs, CESD researchers each completed a working draft summarizing key findings from their analysis by the end of the writeshop.

2.2.3 Agricultural mechanization scoping and cluster survey

Dr. Xiaobo Zhang (IFPRI) visited Myanmar to conduct an intensive rapid scoping of agricultural mechanization in Ayeyarwady and Mandalay with Ben Belton and Myat Thida Win during March. This research revealed machine adoption taking place throughout the country, driven by rising wage rates and labor shortages. A short research note summarizing the findings was written and circulated to donors. Following Dr. Zhang's visit, MSU and CESD staff designed a survey instrument for agricultural machinery supply businesses in Bayintnaung Market (Yangon) agricultural machinery dealerships and related enterprises in Myanmar. The instrument was pretested extensively with businesses located in and around Yangon, and more than 49 businesses were surveyed between June 22 and June 29. Cleaning and analysis of the survey data was well advanced and ready for publication in research highlight in during Q1 of 2017.

2.2.4 Dry Zone Farm and Commodity Survey

Q4 saw the initiation of scoping for field sites for the major survey planned for FY2017. The survey will focus on generating evidence in support of the 'double pivot' towards increased productivity and profitability and greater diversification on-farm advocated in the project supported Agricultural Development Strategy. Preliminary field visits were made to Meiktila, Wundwin, Myittha and Singu, Madaya, and Patheingyi in Mandalay. Township offices of the Department of Agriculture and offices of the Department of Irrigation and the Water Resource Use Department were made. Internal summary presentations and discussion of results occurred at the FSP office, to help focus subsequent scoping decisions.

2.3 Household and Community Livelihoods research

2.3.1 Mon State Rural Household Survey

Cleaning and analysis of the dataset of the Mon State Rural Household Survey (implemented in FY 2015) were completed. CESD staff applied their training with STATA software to this task, in close collaboration with IFPRI and MSU researchers. An intensive 10 day 'write shop' was held in Mawlamyine (Mon State) during early December. Analysis of household income sources by agroecological zone, and detailed analysis of economic activities (including paddy, rubber, marine fisheries, non-farm income, migration and remittances) was conducted, in addition to descriptive analysis of all survey variables.

The IFPRI team visited Mon State during the final two weeks of March in order to work with the CESD research team to validate survey results through focus groups, and gather additional contextual data to complement household survey data and support of the development of a Mon State Rural Development Strategy. The Mon State Rural Development strategy, [Revitalized Agriculture for Balanced Growth and Resilient Livelihoods: Toward a Rural Development Strategy for Mon State, Myanmar](#), and full MSRHS report, [Rural Livelihoods in Mon State: Evidence from a Representative Household Survey](#), were published in September. A policy brief summarizing key findings from the rural development strategy was also published http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/fsp/burma/RDS_Policy_brief_branded%20FINAL_7-26-16.pdf.

2.3.2 Economics of Hope Survey

February saw extensive pretesting of a survey on the economics of hope. This was administered in March to a sub-sample of 600 households surveyed previously under the Mon State Rural Household Survey. 24 enumerators who had worked under MSRHS were recruited and trained. Data collection was completed by mid-March. Enumerators reported that aspirations and confidence in achieving them were generally higher for wealthier households compared to poorer, and influenced by degree of exposure life beyond the village. Although the enumerators were approximately balanced in gender composition, and most had a college education, few female enumerators had set goals for themselves compared to male enumerators. In discussion they felt that the concept of “goal setting” needs to be introduced into education at an early age but is not explicitly addressed at present. This eye-opening experience with well-educated enumerators led us to study “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People” with our FSP team as part of our in-house capacity building program.

2.4 Capacity building and outreach

2.4.1 Capacity building

Survey implementation and data analysis activities conducted under MAAS represented a major component of capacity building for project researchers. This comprised an immersive program of guided learning by doing, with activities including survey design, pre-testing, translation, training for trainers, enumerator supervision and logistical support, as well as the use of STATA software to enable data cleaning and analysis. This training and its direct practical application represents an extremely valuable addition to the skillset of researchers involved. As part of these efforts, Ellen Payongayong (MSU) conducted a one week training on the use of STATA software for survey analysis for 9 CESD staff members, combined with data cleaning activities, prior to the analysis of MAAS data that took place during the intensive writeshop in Pyin Oo Lwin during July and subsequently.

During the workshop and in the following months, pairs of CESD researchers took responsibility for analyzing, writing up and presenting research results, gaining valuable experience in the process, with guidance from MSU and IFPRI staff. These teams had a number of paper proposals accepted for international conferences to be held in 2017, including two papers to be presented at the Myanmar Update conference to be held at Australian National University, and two papers at the Asian Association of Agricultural

Economists conference at Kasetsart University in Thailand. CESD staff are also working with MSU and IFPRI staff on several of academic publications currently in preparation. These include a journal article on migration in Mon State, a chapter for a book on mechanization to be published by IFPRI, and a chapter on aquaculture for inclusion in a book to be published by Chiba University (Japan) on Myanmar's integration into ASEAN.

Participation in several international conferences and symposia also provided an opportunity to disseminate project findings to a wider audience, and for CESD researchers to gain experience of presenting. These included the Global Food Security Conference, Cornell, USA; the Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum conference, Thailand; and the Symposium on Small-Scale Fisheries in the Asia-Pacific Region, Thailand.

2.4.2 Outreach

Project staff participated actively in a large number of outreach activities. A selection of these is summarized below.

Paul Dorosh and Mateusz Filipowski (IFPRI), Zaw Oo (CESD) and Duncan Boughton (MSU) met with the Chief Minister of Mon State to present findings from the Mon State Rural Development Strategy to senior members of the Mon State parliament. A presentation made during this visit can be accessed here:

http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/fsp/burma/DevStrategy_Mon_state.pdf

Findings from aquaculture value chain rapid reconnaissance activities were presented at a half day seminar organized by CESD and MSU researchers in Yangon on January 30, for an audience of 54 development partners, private sector, civil society and government representatives. Findings from the workshop were featured in several national and international media outlets. The workshop agenda and links to presentations are as follows:

- [Agenda](#)
- Presentation 1: The status of aquaculture in Myanmar: A review of existing data. Kyan Htoo, Research Associate, CESD. [English version](#). [Myanmar version](#).
- Presentation 2: The structure and performance of aquaculture value chains in Myanmar. Dr Ben Belton, Assistant Professor, Michigan State University. [English version](#). [Myanmar version](#).
- Presentation 03: Policy options for inclusive aquaculture growth. Aung Hein, Research Associate, CESD. [English version](#). [Myanmar version](#).
- Press release. [English version](#). Myanmar version.

Duncan Boughton made policy presentations on the role of agriculture and rural economic development at numerous national policy meetings. These included the Second National Vegetable Sector Round Table; the Agriculture and Rural Development Sector Working Group; the Workshop on Least Developed Country Graduation (Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development); the launch event for the Proximity Design publication 'Paddy to Plate'. Duncan Boughton and Ben Belton both participated in the OECD seminar "Building Comprehensive Policy Framework for Sustainable Agriculture Development and Food Security in Myanmar" on June 13, and the OECD-FAO-ASEAN Regional Conference on "Policies to Enable Food Security, Agricultural Productivity and

Improved Nutrition” (June 14-15), at which Ben Belton gave a presentation on fisheries and food security in ASEAN.

Myat Thida Win and Khan Htoo (CESD) met with the USAID Administrator Gayle Smith, at a ‘town hall meeting’ with farmers and discussed findings from FSP scoping work on agricultural mechanization. FSP helped to organize a field visit for Justin Finnegan of the USAID Bureau of Food Security on June 9 to visit agricultural machinery suppliers, rental service providers and users in Yangon and Twantay.

CESD organized a training event on economic reform for 34 incoming MPs for Yangon region on December 8th. Duncan Boughton gave a presentation on “Agriculture: Engine of Rural Economic Growth in Myanmar”, available at <http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/fsp/burma/index.htm#pp>

Ben Belton was interviewed by CNN about the potential of aquaculture development in Myanmar in the context of ASEAN integration for a segment on CNN business news titled ‘The Road to ASEAN’. The video can be viewed here: <http://edition.cnn.com/videos/world/2016/06/21/road-to-asean-myanmar-aquaculture-spc.cnn>

3. FY17 Work Plan Highlights

The FSPP workplan for FY 17 builds on accomplishments and lessons learned during the first two years of implementation. We focus on generating evidence for enabling key stakeholders, especially the new government, to promote broad-based agricultural transformation and rural economic growth. The project will use carefully targeted and focused research, together with policy analysis and engagement, to improve public policies and investments. Activities will be undertaken in a way that strengthens coordination among key stakeholders – government, private sector, civil society and donors. The outcome will be a policy environment that enhances smallholder productivity and income growth, and encourages domestic and international agribusiness investment.

The research component of the project will complete analysis of aquaculture and paddy profitability in the Delta, and initiate a new study of irrigated farming systems in the Dry Zone. First we will disseminate analysis of farm management practices, and productivity and profitability outcomes, for aquaculture, paddy and pulse farmers in the Yangon and Ayeyarwady divisions. Surveys of up- and downstream value chain enterprises – including input supply, marketing and processing enterprises - will also be undertaken and analyzed. Second, we will undertake scoping, site selection and initial data collection for a multi-year study in the Central Dry Zone. The purpose will be to analyze the current and potential profitability of different cropping systems and value chains, making use of a range of irrigation sources. Findings will be used to inform the design of more effective agricultural investment strategies by government, donors and civil society.

The policy component will utilize project research outputs to engage closely with the new policy unit in the Department of Planning (DOP) of the Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Irrigation (MOALI). The project will enable the DOP to advocate for and respond

more effectively to requests for improved policies, strategies and investment plans. Policy engagement will be conducted in a way to encourage coordination among government ministries at Union and State/Region levels, as well as between government, private sector, donor and civil society stakeholders. The project will also engage with Yezin Agricultural University to support their commitment to be an effective provider of applied policy research.

The project will continue to collaborate with the Centre for Economic and Social Development, now independently registered with a new management board, and IFPRI. To increase the intensity of research and policy engagement the project will submit a proposal for supplementary resources to the LIFT fund. To enhance communication the FSPP in-country team plans to circulate a short monthly update in addition to standard quarterly reporting.

The full workplan can be downloaded from:

http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/fsp/burma/FSP_Burma_workplan_for_USAID_9_13_16.pdf .