



Summary of DFID's work in Burma 2011-2016

February 2015

Why we work in Burma

A resource-rich Burma that is accountable to its people and open to responsible foreign investment has great potential to reverse years of economic stagnation. Our aim is to harness this potential to help create a better governed, more peaceful and prosperous Burma that uses its increased wealth to reduce poverty.

The remarkable process of change since November 2010 is creating an environment in which the UK can transform the lives of even more poor people in Burma. DFID is now able to work with new partners in sectors including economic development, democratic governance and peacebuilding, to achieve the greatest impact with British aid.

Despite political and economic progress Burma remains one of the poorest countries in Asia, and underlying ethnic tensions have the potential to undermine the reform process. Despite its economic potential Burma is still one of the hardest places to do business in the world, ranking 177 of 189 countries in the 2015 World Bank Doing Business Survey. A quarter of the population do not have enough money to meet their basic food and living needs and the country is off track to achieve many of the Millennium Development Goals. Burma's record on health is one of the worst in Asia, and the country suffers some of the highest rates of malaria, malnutrition (especially amongst children) and tuberculosis in the world. In Kachin, intensified fighting has left over 80,000 people internally displaced. And intercommunal violence in Rakhine State has led to segregation of communities and a serious humanitarian situation. More than six decades of political unrest and armed conflict have left an estimated 500,000 people displaced in the border areas of eastern Burma.



School children in Burma
Photo: © DFID



Pa O farmers supported by UK aid.
Photo: © LIFT/AZM, 2011

What we will achieve

To support Burma's transformation we will base our support around 5 pillars:

- Supporting peacebuilding and conflict resolution
- Improving democratic governance and accountability
- Supporting economic transformation and job creation
- Supporting the development of a dynamic and resilient rural population and economy
- Developing human capital

Key results by 2015 include

- Helping 124,000 women access financial services.
- Averting 153,000 unwanted pregnancies through access to family planning services.
- Ensuring 500,000 women and men receive treatment to contain the spread of drug-resistant malaria.
- Helping over 220,000 children to complete primary school.
- Providing humanitarian assistance to people affected by conflict in Kachin, Rakhine and eastern Burma, and to Burmese refugees in Thailand.
- Helping local community groups to work together to give people more of a say in decisions that affect their lives and increase political rights and civil liberties.



Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on a visit to a DFID project, Myaing Township, Feb 2012. Photo: © LIFT

Who we will work with

Partnerships are vital to DFID's effectiveness in Burma. The suspension in April 2012 and lifting in April 2013 of EU sanctions (excluding the arms embargo) allowed us to open a new dialogue with the Burmese government. None of our aid will be provided directly through central government, instead through United Nations organisations, trusted international and local NGOs and, where circumstances allow, at the township level. We will also initiate private sector partnerships to stimulate inclusive and responsible investment. We have already demonstrated that aid can deliver results through these channels. We remain in close touch with key stakeholders, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, in developing our strategies. The UK remains one of the largest donors to Burma; committing £291 million (approximately \$450 million) to support the country over four years (2011-2016).

How we will work

We have a duty to deliver and demonstrate value for every pound of taxpayers' money spent helping the people of Burma. We will continue to work only with local and international partners that have tested monitoring mechanisms in place to ensure our aid reaches those that need it most. We will continue to make our aid transparent to people both in the UK and in Burma: showing how we are improving the lives of some of the poorest people in Asia.

We will:

- Publish the updated DFID Burma Operational Plan, translating sections 1-4 into Burmese.
- Encourage our partners to meet the standards of the International Aid Transparency Initiative and publish details of the work we support.
- Increase support to local Burmese organisations to promote greater accountability.

More information

For a more detailed breakdown of Burma's Operational Plan, please visit
<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dfid-burma-operational-plan-2014>

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