



European Commission

External Evaluation of European Union's Cooperation with Myanmar



This evaluation is an independent evidence-based assessment of the European Union's (EU) development cooperation with Myanmar in 2012-2017. It aims to identify key lessons, instil good practices and provide recommendations to improve and inform future cooperation.

It focuses on the current four focal sectors for development cooperation: **Education, Peace-Building, Governance and Rural Development**. Crosscutting issues: Human rights based approach: gender, human rights, child rights, conflict sensitivity; environment and climate change.

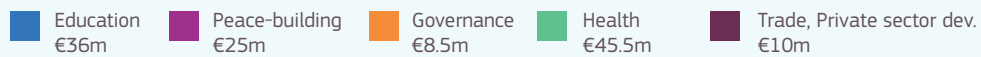
EU Development Cooperation

The EU is a large donor to Myanmar. Its portfolio grew significantly from a committed amount of EUR 125 million in 2007-2013 to EUR 656 million in 2014-2020, responding to the political changes and country's priorities and needs.

Key Figures

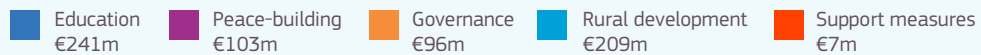
Total EUR 125 million

MIP 2007-2013



Total EUR 656 million

MIP 2014-2020



Methodological approach

The evaluation is theory-based, carried out from May 2018 to September 2019. Its methodological framework was designed to develop an understanding of what worked, what did not work and under which conditions, so that lessons can be drawn and feed future support. Based on the analysis of EU's strategic framework for Myanmar, an inventory was prepared and eight evaluation questions with judgement criteria and indicators were defined to guide data collection and analysis. The evaluation was managed by DG DEVCO's Evaluation and Results Unit. The evaluation process was overseen by a Reference Group consisting of all EU relevant services.

Conclusions



STRATEGY AND APPROACH

C 1 - The EU strategy evolved with the changing context and was broadened in response to the democratic transition and peace process.

C 2 - The choice of focal sectors was appropriate, relevant and mutually reinforcing.

C 3 - The EU pursued a comprehensive approach to support peace in Myanmar. Peace was addressed across the four sectors, and interventions were in general conflict-sensitive although this was not always approached in a formalised and systematic manner.

C 4 - The EU's programmatic support was flexible, adaptable and responded to both emerging opportunities and crises. The mix of instruments and modalities allowed for a rapid and more comprehensive engagement with national systems as the context matured.



RESULTS

C 5 - Significant results were achieved. Education access was improved and livelihoods were made more resilient to external shocks. A substantial contribution was made to the peace process and access to justice. Election participation was improved and transparency was enhanced. However, some intended results were not achieved, often due to the disruption caused by conflict and the overall deterioration of Human rights situation.

Recommendations & Key actions



R 1 - Implement a systematic approach to conflict sensitivity across the EU country programme.

Mainstream and standardise conflict sensitivity approaches by the EU and implementing partners

- Mainstream conflict sensitivity into the programme cycle.
- Include conflict sensitivity measures in policy dialogue priorities for budget support operations.
- Introduce explicit conflict sensitive standards and requirements into grant application procedures and contracts with implementing partners.
- Strengthen staff capacities on conflict sensitivity.
- Develop non-discrimination and due diligence criteria to be applied and met prior to, and during, programme implementation.
- Invest in peacebuilding and conflict awareness-raising in areas that are not affected by conflict.

C 6 - Achieving sustainability was a challenge across the four focal sectors in the volatile context and with the generally low level of direct involvement of local authorities.



CROSS-CUTTING AND MULTI-SECTORAL ISSUES

C 7 - Mainstreaming of cross-cutting and multi-sectoral issues was uneven. Positive results were achieved on gender and human rights at the intervention level, however, without resulting in substantial nation-wide advances towards greater respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and gender. Environment and climate change considerations were insufficiently integrated into programming.



PARTNERSHIP

C 8 - Coordination and the achievement of synergies within the EU support was generally effective. However, the humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach has not yet been fully institutionalised, and its programming remains a challenge.

C 9 - The EU made concerted efforts to improve coordination, yet coordination and collaboration with other development partners proved difficult.



R 2 - Implement a systematic approach to ensuring sustainability and continuity. Emphasise ensuring continuity and consolidating processes initiated and results achieved, and improving the technical and financial capacity of the Government to implement policies and provide services to the citizens of Myanmar.

- Maintain the four current focal sectors – education, peacebuilding, governance and rural development in the next programme period.
- Increase the focus on building the capacity of the Government to implement policies, including through further engagement of the Government in the implementation of EU-funded interventions.
- Engage in building the capacity of the Government at the local/sub-national level as duty – bearers to bearers to meet citizen's demands vis-à-vis good governance and peacebuilding, while keeping the local context and conflict-sensitivity issues in mind and maintaining support to ethnic providers.
- Further engage in interventions that support the Government in enhancing its capacity to collect revenues.



R 3 - Enhance mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues and multi-sectoral themes. Include specific objectives, indicators, baselines and targets for cross-cutting issues, and introduce mainstreaming procedures and approaches across interventions.

- Apply an explicit gender focus in the country strategy, through the inclusion of explicit gender-specific objectives and a budget for gender specific actions in the 2021-2028 MIP.
- Introduce environment, climate change and disaster risk reduction mainstreaming procedures and guidelines in trust funds.
- Include environment, climate change and disaster risk reduction and awareness raising indicators and targets in sector budget support.
- Include climate risk assessments and adaptation measures in interventions.
- Include nutrition awareness in the support for the education sector.



R 4 - Further improve in-house coordination and cooperation. Strengthen the joint implementation of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in conflict-affected areas, and the synergies between the programmatic support and the political engagement.

- Building on existing structures for cooperation (such as the humanitarian-development-peace nexus action plan, conduct regular team meetings and the joint engagement in policy dialogue in relation to sector budget support), further institutionalise cooperation between DEVCO, EEAS and ECHO at the EU Delegation in the standard operating procedures, such as:
 1. Prepare regular and joint updates of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus action plan.
 2. Sharing of political information with technical level staff as a standard agenda point for EU Delegation team meetings.
 3. Ensure that the design of all interventions planned in conflict-affected areas is peer reviewed by the different sections (DEVCO, EEAS, ECHO) – also with a view of identifying options for joint engagement.
 4. Ensure that the procedures for humanitarian-development-peace nexus are kept lean and operational.
- Further enhance cooperation between DEVCO and EEAS at the technical level with joint engagement in the policy dialogue at the sector and intervention levels.
- Explore opportunities to further operationalise the humanitarian-development-peace nexus through joint development and funding of interventions with both DEVCO and ECHO components (the new “Nexus Response Mechanism” will involve DEVCO, ECHO and EEAS).
- Pursue enhanced cooperation with EU MS on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus –with a medium-term view of using it as a lever to reactivate joint programming



- More than 400 documents reviewed,
- Interviews with a large range of stakeholders,
- Site visits,
- Civil Society consultation workshop in Yangon.

Evaluation Questions addressing SDGs

