Strengthening food security and the food system and promoting business models for integrating the socially underprivileged

Context

In more than a third of Myanmar's communities, people's daily lives are influenced by long-term conflicts. There are also considerable inequalities between ethnic groups when it comes to access to land, markets, jobs and services. This generates social tensions. The programme supports social and economic integration in conflict-ridden and remote parts of Myanmar in an endeavour to help combat poverty. The military coup in February 2021 meant that hundreds of thousands more people were internally displaced and/or lost their jobs. HEKS/EPER has therefore also stepped up its efforts to secure food supplies for these people, by cooperating wherever possible with enterprises and in a manner that strengthens peasant families and struggling small businesses.

Objectives, priorities, activities

The country programme deploys innovative solutions in an effort sustainably to enhance incomes, food security and social integration for marginalised and displaced people in rural parts of Myanmar. It also supports smallholder families in developing and marketing their products.

To improve the food security of internally displaced people and those in conflict zones, HEKS/EPER coordinates the distribution of food packets with local organisations and volunteer groups. HEKS/EPER makes every effort to ensure that products are bought locally or in regions where farmers are struggling to sell their products owing to the upheavals stemming from the military coup. Besides, HEKS/EPER works

MYANMAR

HEKS/EPER Main Focus: Development of Rural Communities

MYANMAR

INDIA
BANGLA-
DESH
CHINA
MYANMAR
LAOS
THAILAND

54'050'000
Population (2019)

676'578
Area km²

with businesses to strengthen and assure the long-term survival of these food chains.

HEKS/EPER works with businesses to devise ways in which excluded groups can be better integrated into business activities. This entails supporting suppliers or product purchasers who already cooperate with marginalized sectors of the population in expanding and adapting existing activities. This is done, on the one hand, through business investments or technical support for the development of business models. On the other hand, the further training of farmers' groups and their networking with buyers make for fair cooperation. To assist young entrepreneurs from marginalized sections of the society in developing their business concepts, HEKS/EPER supports continuing training programmes in relevant aspects of business management and guidance in the implementation of strategies.

Target groups

Target groups include marginalized ethnic minorities in remote, conflict-ridden areas where people have only limited access to sales outlets and public services, as well as people internally displaced by the conflict surrounding the military coup.

Partnerships, networks, alliances, memberships

HEKS/EPER Myanmar is a member of ACT Alliance. HEKS/EPER also works with local aid agencies, volunteer groups and businesses.

HEKS/EPER on the ground

HEKS/EPER maintains a Coordination Office in Myanmar with two local recruits. An international programme leader currently runs the programme from Cambodia.

Topics and working approach

Because of the military coup, HEKS/EPER currently avoids cooperation with the government. HEKS/EPER cooperates with enterprises wanting to make their business model more inclusive and with young entrepreneurs keen to develop their business models. HEKS/EPER works with several local organizations and volunteer groups to distribute food and toiletries. This means ensuring that existing private-sector distribution systems are used and that marginalized farmers can continue to sell their products, all of which reinforces the production chain.

Country:
Myanmar

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