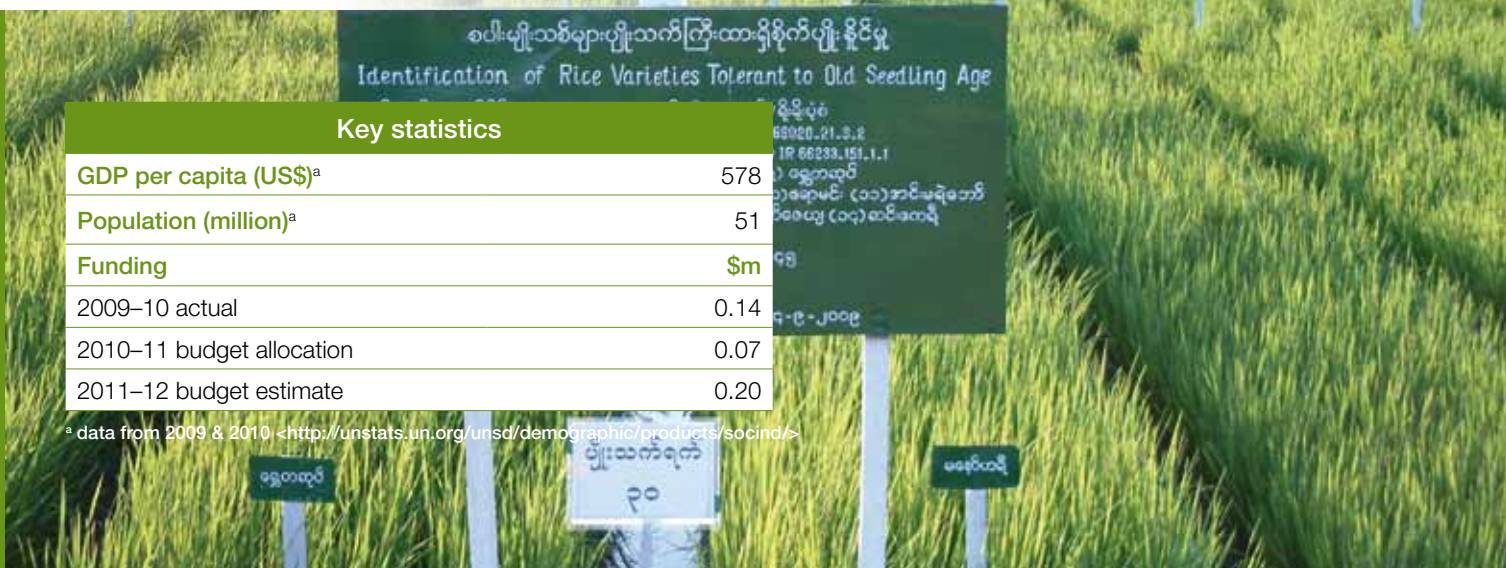


BURMA



Experimental plots in Yezin, Burma. Photographer: David Herridge

MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGY

Australia's strategic approach to aid in Burma (Myanmar) is to improve the lives of the Burmese people in the short term and help support improved capacity to design and deliver essential services and encourage reform in the long term. To achieve this goal, Australia is currently providing support to activities that target immediate needs in the health, education, and livelihoods and food security sectors. The focus is on strengthening the capacity of people and organisations in these sectors, as well as supporting vulnerable populations across Burma and on the borders with Thailand and Bangladesh. ACIAR's program is fully aligned with the above approach of the Australian Government, targeting vulnerable populations to improve nutrition and food security. The main aim of the program is to develop a small number of multilateral collaborative research projects that can have positive impacts, either directly or

through increases in farmers' cash incomes. Projects are based in similar agroecological zones to those in Australia—the central dry zone and the tropical lowlands. There is a strong need for training due to the isolation of many of Burma's agricultural scientists from international cooperation over recent years.

ACIAR's aim is to continue to work predominantly through international organisations and NGOs, including Australian-accredited organisations. Working with agencies with a longstanding presence on the ground has proved that it is possible to deliver assistance in an effective and accountable way. For example, promising results have been achieved in a multilateral ACIAR project led by the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) (India) on improving the productivity of legumes in the central dry zone of Burma. Based on the achievements of these projects and scoping missions, ACIAR has developed a new framework for assistance for Burma. However, the implementation of any new programs hinges on political developments in Burma securing favourable and sufficient access to enable ACIAR to effectively deliver, monitor and assess project activities.

2011–12 RESEARCH PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS

Future research priorities would be within the following spectrum:

- Further collaboration for improvement in the productivity of grain legumes
- Diversification and intensification of rice-based cropping systems to increase overall productivity and farm income



Smallholders taking part in an ACIAR survey in the central dry zone of Burma. Photographer: David Herridge

- Smallholder and community aquaculture development / post-Nargis community remediation in the Ayeyarwady Delta
- Research support for smallholder livestock-based cattle enterprises in the central dry zone
- Socioeconomic factors affecting the acceptability and adoption of promising technologies

SMCN/2010/071 (proposed) Improved food security and farmer livelihoods through enhanced legume cultivation in the central dry zone of Burma

This project has been developed following a series of discussions between ACIAR and AusAID Asia Division with regard to ACIAR's involvement in the provision of extended technical assistance to Burma.

Principal regional coordinator

Dr Gamini Keerthisinghe

Key program managers

Dr Gamini Keerthisinghe, Soil Management and Crop Nutrition
 Dr Caroline Lemerle, Agricultural Systems Management
 Dr Doug Gray, Animal Health
 Dr Chris Barlow, Fisheries
 Dr Peter Home, Livestock Production Systems

Country manager

Khun Chiraporn Sunpakit

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (2011–12)

- A new program established to improve productivity in the crop, fisheries and livestock sectors
- A partnership created with OIE, SEACFMD and participating countries to assess and control livestock biosecurity risks

A Burmese woman feeding her chickens, which have been vaccinated against Newcastle disease through an ACIAR animal health project

