



“A striking finding from the evaluation team’s field visit and interviews with national stakeholders was how quickly and extensively a modern approach to National Quality Infrastructure development has been embraced.”

Tom Pengelly, Independent Evaluation Expert,
Saana Consulting

Myanmar: Strengthening the National Quality Infrastructure for Trade

Myanmar’s trade, economy and private sector are central to its sustainable development and poverty alleviation agenda. The ability of countries like Myanmar to exploit their commercial opportunities, compete on global markets and participate in international value chains is often challenged by their difficulties in demonstrating compliance with quality requirements and trade rules. Setting up a Quality Infrastructure System is a key step towards a thriving economy as a basis for prosperity, health and well-being.

UNIDO’S APPROACH

The project implemented by UNIDO helped the national economy to improve the quality of goods and services through strengthening relevant institutional and private sector capacities. In this project, UNIDO adopted a systemic integrated approach addressing deficiencies in four pillars of the National Quality Infrastructure:

- **Quality Policy Formulation:** UNIDO helped Myanmar to formulate its National Quality Policy to build foundation for effective trade;
- **Department of Research and Innovation (DRI):** UNIDO’s main counterpart was the Department of Research and Innovation (DRI) of the Ministry of Education, the main institution responsible for compliance with quality standards in Myanmar;
- **Conformity Assessment:** Inspection bodies and testing laboratories in the food sector received technical support that increased their confidence and the quality of their test results;
- **Private Sector Enterprises:** a team of national specialists provided direct assistance to private enterprises in the agro food sector, helping them to apply Good Manufacturing Practices, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) and ISO 22000-based food safety management system standards.

IMPACT

The intervention fostered the use of international standards and conformity assessment procedures by the private sector to add value to their products, with Myanmar’s SMEs increasing competitiveness on international markets, along with assistance on quality policy formulation and strengthening of national quality infrastructure institutions.

Technical assistance provided under the project increased confidence in and the quality of the test results of Myanmar’s laboratories and inspection bodies. The project developed the capacity of laboratories’ testing of agro food products, allowing them to meet increasing demand from the regulatory authorities to support

market surveillance, but also to address the industry’s routine testing needs.

WAY FORWARD

The project allowed Myanmar’s processed food products to be better able to access markets across Southeast Asia and beyond. Myanmar has been on a course of economic reforms. Within these reforms, international trade is set to be a central component for strengthening national competitiveness and social well-being. Following the very good cooperation with the local beneficiaries and needs of private sector enterprises, the country still needs to continue developing quality systems along selected value chains for greater market access of local businesses.

AT A GLANCE

Project title	Strengthening National Quality Infrastructure for Trade in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Thematic area	Trade Capacity Building (TCB)
Donor	Norad (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation)
Project counterpart	Department of Research and Innovation (DRI) of Ministry of Education; Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Department of Ministry of Health, Youth and Sports; Commodity Testing and Quality Management Centre (CTQMC) of Ministry of Commerce.
Budget	€ 2,650,806 (incl. support costs)
Duration	4 years (2014 – 2018)