

Annex 10; Success story of how to cooperate among rice farmers and millers.



Bilin Township is one of the main rice-growing townships in Mon State, with over 10,000 acres of monsoon paddy and over 5,000 acres of summer paddy. Monsoon paddy is mainly cultivated by rainwater as summer paddy needs irrigation. The Kazin Dam in Bilin Township provides the irrigation water for the villages in Bilin Township for summer paddy cultivation. There are nine major villages which mainly grow summer paddy and five of these villages are working with the Helvetas program (GoMP and CSR/WAPRO projects). During the last summer paddy season, villagers planted over 8,000 acres of

summer paddy in excess of the normal acreage. By the end of the 2019 Monsoon, because of some mismanagement of rainwater collection in the irrigation system, the dam collected only enough rainwater to irrigate around 5,000 acres. As a result, there was a need for irrigation water for over 3,000 acres, with most affected farmers in the program implementation areas.

Mon state Hluttaw representatives and respective administration departments under the guidance of the Mon State government, addressed the shortage of irrigation water. The Department of Irrigation Officials and the Department of Agriculture made joint consultations with us, the Coastal Farmers Development Association of Zwa Ka Li, Bilin to try to solve this issue. After the consultation we agreed to pump water from the Bilin River into the newly constructed irrigation channel. The installation and operation of the water pumps was led by Hluttaw representatives and officials from the Department of Irrigation.



However, the water couldn't reach all the paddy fields. Therefore, one of the project villages, Zwa Ka La in Bilin township, has asked the Gulf of Mottama Project for assistance to raise the issue through the Coastal Farmers Development Association. With the assistance of a rice miller, who already cooperated with Helvetas, we drafted a proposal to provide additional

water pumps to pump enough water for our summer paddy. After receiving the submissions of the proposal, GoMP and CSR/WAPRO staff met with us to discuss the proposal and approve it.



The project provided funds to purchase a 30 hp-engine engine and related equipment to assist us to pump water from Bilin river into the irrigation scheme. When the water is pumped from the Bilin river into the main irrigation channel and successively into the small distribution canals, each

village collects a fee from the farmers based on how much water is pumped into their fields, and their own schedule. This makes it a self-determined water resource management system.

As a result, additional benefits to more than 500 acres of summer paddy from Zwe Ka La farmers were successfully harvested. Yield per acre was 75-80 baskets / acre. This successful cultivation is due to the participatory coordination between the village administrator and the farmers through facilitation by CFDA.



For the sustainable operation and maintenance of the water pumping system; the Bilin CFDA is taking a leading role and share responsibilities with the Village Development Committee and farmers' groups in the areas. From the intervention we learned:

- 1) CFDA has gained confidence in coordination and linking with local department, private sector and other respective stakeholder, and is seen as a reliable partner in development.
- 2) How collaboration between business people, especially rice millers, and farmers can be

successful,

- 3) Sharing and managing water resources among the farmer in an efficient way.
- 4) Gain practical knowledge and practices of water resource management and notice to make better planning for next winter crop.



In the conclusion, we overcame some difficulties, which made us more united and increased our understanding how to share the water resources in a practical way. We learned that we can work together peacefully and face many challenges.

Presented by CFDA-Bilin