

Supporting

# Myanmar's vegetable farmers

to produce quality vegetables



To diversify income sources, farmers are learning how to grow vegetables in a market-conscious, profitable way. Through collaboration, East-West Seed and Mercy Corps are transferring knowledge to and between farmers on Good Agricultural Practice (GAP), selling appropriate quality seeds and creating linkages to market vendors.

## About Myanmar's vegetable sector

- Vegetables currently offer an important source of income for an estimated 1 million households in Myanmar
- For over 35 percent of these farmers, vegetables are thought to represent their primary source of family income
- Until recently, government policy in Myanmar has predominately been focused on the development of the rice industry
- The sector has experienced low levels of productivity due to the lack of access to quality seeds, outdated farming techniques and lack of market linkages



### Multi-stakeholder partnership platform

*Grow Asia has aligned best practices, aggregated networks and provided a central platform for change*

- Supported the Myanmar Agriculture Network (MAN) by developing and implementing a clear governance structure and providing secretariat support to the Working Groups (WG)
- Brought in new projects and partners under MAN's Vegetables Working Group
- Worked with the Vegetables Working Group and the Vegetable Sector Acceleration Taskforce (VSAT) to provide regional learning and best practices
- Supported WG and VSAT initiatives, providing a platform to re-engage members and a call to action for government
- Through regional events such as the Grow Asia Forum and Practitioners' Workshop, Grow Asia gives members a space to learn and grow their membership



### Myanmar Agriculture Network (MAN)

*Country Partnerships facilitate and coordinate action on the ground*

- A Seeds Working Group is influencing the government to establish regulations around certification and import of seeds
- The Horticulture Working Group has helped align and strengthen the multiple projects in Myanmar and introduce additional partners
- MAN Horticulture Working Group has merged with the former VSAT, in order to better coordinate activities and bring stakeholders together
- VSAT composed of 35 members with support from MAN, Mercy Corps Making Vegetable Markets Work programme and the Netherlands Economic Mission in Myanmar
- Achievements:
  - Produced a report on the vegetables sector in Myanmar
  - Supported the development of the wholesale markets in Yangon (opened in 2017) and Mandalay



## National tri-sector behavior and collaboration improved

Benefiting from Myanmar's entire vegetable sector

- The government is adjusting its policy for the vegetable sector, away from exports to a domestic urban market in line with the findings of the Working Group and businesses
- Investments have started, funded by a mix of development partners and business in several states of the country: Shan state, Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay
- Following a tri-sector event meeting, investors in marketing infrastructure and digital systems are collaborating to improve the efficiency of marketing from field to wholesale market



## Smallholder Impact

Farmers are benefiting from training and realizing increased profits

Reached around

# 15,000

farmers



Increased



supply and demand of agro-inputs, with input dealers now supplying mulch, trellis netting and seed trays

Over the last three years, key farmers have been realizing average profit margins of around

# 250,000

(183 USD)  
MMK



per crop on small plots of 500 sqm

Training demonstrations have piqued interest of government, who are now conducting **Train-the-Trainer** programs for their extension staff through East-West Seed 

“ What truly invigorated me was seeing the changes taking place on the ground. My field trip with East-West Seed allowed me to see the extraordinary work they have been doing to support smallholders. This support has allowed farmers' work to become more profitable through the introduction of new production techniques and new crops. More importantly, I was hearing first hand accounts of farmers coming out of debt with the increased profits from the program. This has emphasized the tangible effect our work has. Myanmar faces large obstacles but the combination of sound plans and the concrete improvements seen on the ground makes me believe that the future is bright in Myanmar.

**Grahame Dixie**  
Executive Director,  
Grow Asia

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“ I have been growing vegetables, especially cucumbers, using traditional methods and every year I would be unsure about the production, yield and quality. After getting assistance from East-West Seed I was able to increase my income and yield using the systematic technique they taught. East-West Seed provided trainings, quality seeds, seed trays, technical mentoring and regular monitoring. Now, I have a better understanding of how to use pesticide and fertilizer and how to protect crops.

**U Win Zaw Oo**  
The Kone Gyi village,  
Lae Way Township

“ I did not have experience growing vegetables so I relied on field crops which are not a stable source of income due to climate change. The newly acquired knowledge helped me to grow vegetables throughout the year within a small area, giving me a higher yield and income for my family. I did not have to take a loan to send money for my son's hostel and tuition fees for his grade 11 education.

**Ko Kyi Tun**  
Thapyay Pin Village,  
Ingapu Township

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