



► Earthquake recovery and livelihood support initiative in the Mandalay region and Shan state

**3.5
million**

forcibly displaced
persons

**US\$36.8
million per day**

is the estimated scale of
initial income losses

76%

of affected communities
are in the Mandalay
Region

3,454

homes destroyed
in Inle Lake area

In March 2025, a 7.7-magnitude earthquake struck Myanmar, affecting 58 townships and impacting over 17 million people, with more than 9 million in urgent need of assistance. The Mandalay Region bore the brunt of the damage, representing 76 percent of all affected localities, while in the Inle Lake area in Shan state, 3,454 households were destroyed or severely damaged. Up to 3.5 million workers were employed in the areas most severely affected by the earthquake. Initial income losses were estimated to as high as US\$36.8 million per day.¹



Mandalay Region after the earthquake in March 2025

The earthquake compounded an already alarming humanitarian crisis in Myanmar, with an estimated 19.9 million people in need of assistance as a result of ongoing conflict, displacement, economic hardship and other disasters, including flooding in September 2024 that affected more than 1 million people. Prior to the earthquakes, more than 3.5 million people had been forced to flee their homes, over 15 million were already experiencing food insecurity and protection concerns were mounting. The earthquakes exacerbated already severe needs and vulnerabilities, with the destruction of shelters, community buildings, water points, and latrines adding to public health and protection risks, particularly for women, children, older persons, and persons with disabilities. The disruption of livelihoods has slowed recovery in the affected areas.

¹ <https://www.ilo.org/publications/employment-implications-earthquake-myanmar>

The project in a nutshell

PROJECT NAME

Enhanced Livelihood Recovery and Community Resilience in Earthquake-Affected Areas in Myanmar²

TIMEFRAME

1 July 2025 – 28 February 2026

BUDGET

650,350 USD

PRIORITY GROUPS

Disadvantaged and low-income households, women and young people, vulnerable and marginalized local communities

POLICY AREAS

- Skills
- Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work³
- Social cohesion
- HDP Nexus



Site safety measures during the road rehabilitation works in Mandalay Region

KEY PARTNERS

Workers' organizations

The Confederation of Trade Unions in Myanmar (CTUM)
Myanmar Industries Craft and Service Trade Union Federation (MICS-TusF Myanmar)
Agriculture and Farmers Federation of Myanmar and Food Allied Workers (AFFM-FAW)

Employers' organizations

Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI)

UN partners

UN Country Team

² The project is implemented under [ILC.113/Resolution I \(2025\)](#): Resolution concerning the measures recommended by the Governing Body under article 33 of the ILO Constitution on the subject of Myanmar, adopted by the General Conference of the International Labour Organization meeting in Geneva at its 113th Session, 2025.

Project summary

The project contributes to community resilience by employing [Employment-Intensive Investment](#) approaches to the rehabilitation of selected community infrastructure in a manner that makes it more resistant to possible future shocks. In parallel with project-provided job opportunities, vocational training is offered to community members considered most

vulnerable to help restore livelihoods and build resilience. By combining infrastructure rehabilitation with skills development, the project seeks to support inclusive recovery and strengthen long-term community resilience in one of Myanmar's most crisis-affected regions.

The project concretely promotes decent work, including safe and healthy working environments. Beneficiaries engaged in disaster relief and related remedial work receive the necessary instruction, information and training in safe and healthy working practices during and after disasters. In particular, the [ILO Code of practice on Safety and Health in Construction](#) is applied to provide guidance in that regard, supporting the realization of a preventative safety and health culture throughout the construction project life cycle and beyond. Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work are also integrated into the project's skills development component.

The project integrates a strong gender component, ensuring almost equal participation (48 percent) of women in jobs and skills opportunities. Project-supported recovery initiatives are inclusive, locally shaped and driven, and designed to respond to both identified infrastructure and livelihood needs, thereby contributing to more resilient communities.

From rebuilding infrastructure to restoring livelihoods, the project empowers communities to recover, adapt and build resilience in the face of crisis.



Workers working on concrete pavement

The Theory of Change below sums up the approach:

Initiatives across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus

OUTPUT

Immediate decent jobs are provided to crisis-affected households.

Priority community infrastructure is rehabilitated, maintained and rebuilt, increasing resilience to disasters.

Village development committees are equipped to maintain community infrastructure.

Vulnerable beneficiaries in target communities are better equipped for income-generating activities.

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

Community infrastructure is **rehabilitated**, and households benefit from **temporary decent employment** opportunities.

Community members strengthen their **technical skills** through **infrastructure rehabilitation** and continue to engage in income-generating activities.

Village development committees maintain infrastructure and **promote** community **engagement, investment** and economic recovery.

LONGER-TERM OUTCOMES

Household well-being improves, and local economic activity strengthens as families gain income from temporary employment and longer-term income-generating activities.

Rehabilitated infrastructure improves sanitation and **community health**.

These combined effects **foster collaboration**, investment in community development, economic recovery and social cohesion.

I M P A C T

Strengthened household resilience in target communities.

Employers' and Workers' organizations

Community-based Organizations (CBOs)

Village Development Committees (VDCs)

Community-based Contractors

UNCT

KEY PARTNERS

Expected results

The project promotes inclusive participation and social cohesion, prioritizing vulnerable groups such as single mothers, persons with disabilities, and internally displaced persons, and ensuring equal pay for work of equal value. This includes:

27,300

workdays generated with 30 percent reserved for women, through infrastructure rehabilitation in the two target areas.

1,500+

crisis-affected households supported through creation of temporary employment.

220

workers have strengthened technical skills in construction, weaving, computer literacy, and/or sewing techniques prioritized by women in the communities with at least 50 percent of trained individuals engaging in income-generating activities at the end of the project.

20

community contractors have strengthened skills in contract management, budgeting, and quality control to support ongoing infrastructure development.

25

Village Development Committees (VDCs) have the skills needed for project planning, procurement, oversight, and financial record-keeping, enabling sustainable local decision-making and strengthened community-led governance.

20

Village Infrastructure Operation and Maintenance Committees (VIOMCs) established and trained to support sustainable use, maintenance and local ownership of rehabilitated infrastructure

Together, these employment creation and skills development activities will result in over 20 priority community assets reconstructed or repaired, including educational facilities, multi-purpose buildings, footpaths, rural access roads, and water facilities, more than 70 shelters rebuilt for improved protection, and 150+ latrines reconstructed or repaired, strengthening community sanitation and health.



Participants of textile sewing training



Participants of textile sewing training in dresses designed and made by themselves

Translating the HDP Nexus into practice

DW4P: Operationalizing the Humanitarian–Development–Peace Nexus through Decent Work

COORDINATION: The ILO and social partners work closely with national systems, UN actors, and other stakeholders to integrate decent work principles into crisis response, recovery, and reconstruction.

PROGRAMMING: Through local employment creation, enterprise and skills development, capacity building and social dialogue, DW4P initiatives deliver immediate livelihoods that contribute to long-term recovery, advancing inclusion, gender equality, and social cohesion in fragile settings. Community focus group discussions (separate groups for women and men) ensure the participation of community members in the planning and monitoring of the project.

FINANCING: DW4P entails seed funding for a demonstration project to inform, sustain and expand resource mobilization efforts. It is strategically used to achieve multi-year and flexible financing arrangements that strengthen nationally owned systems and resilient livelihoods, ensuring that recovery and peacebuilding efforts are grounded in decent work and sustainability.

The Humanitarian–Development–Peace (HDP) Nexus refers to a collaborative and integrated approach that seeks to strengthen the complementarity between humanitarian response, long-term development, and peacebuilding efforts. It aims to reduce need, risk, and vulnerability over time by fostering coherence and comprehensiveness of support delivered by the UN, leveraging the comparative advantages of different agencies.

The HDP Nexus approach is built on three mutually reinforcing principles: coordination, programming, and financing. These principles ensure that humanitarian, development, and peace actors work in a coherent way toward shared outcomes. They are used here to underline how the DW4P initiatives apply and reinforce the Nexus approach.



COORDINATION

Collective action for long-term recovery in Myanmar

The project is based on and implemented in close coordination with other UN agencies responding to Myanmar's Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP). It contributes directly to the objectives of key clusters, including Early Recovery, WASH, Education, and Health. Through joint planning, information sharing, and complementary interventions, the ILO contributes with technical expertise on human-centred job-rich recovery, while aligning with the humanitarian and development priorities of partner agencies such as UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, and UN-Habitat.

This collaborative approach ensures that emergency employment and infrastructure rehabilitation efforts contribute not only to immediate recovery but also to long-term resilience and peacebuilding.

Strategic Alignment

This project aligns with key strategic priorities and frameworks guiding recovery and development in Myanmar:

- [ILC.113/Resolution I \(2025\)](#)
- [Myanmar Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2025](#)
- UN Transitional Cooperation Framework (TCF)

The project also contributes to the UN Transitional Cooperation Framework (TCF) Strategic Priority 3 by empowering vulnerable groups to build economic resilience and secure sustainable livelihoods. ILO co-leads the Working Group on Decent Work and Livelihoods, which positions Decent Work as a key element linking humanitarian response, development, and peacebuilding efforts in Myanmar.



PROGRAMMING

Localized and inclusive, with people at the centre

The project provides a strong demonstration of the ILO's mandate and comparative advantage. By promoting labour-intensive infrastructure development, vocational training and income-generating activities, it provides decent work opportunities that enhance the earthquake-affected self-sufficiency of marginalized populations. This supports the TCF's focus on creating gender-responsive and inclusive economic empowerment while addressing the shocks caused.

The approach is localized:

It is implemented with local Village Development Committees (VDCs) that have been established in each of the 25 target localities. The committees, composed of an equal representation of men and women, were selected by local residents to ensure inclusive and representative decision-making and accountability. VDCs are trained by ILO on project planning, procurement, oversight, and financial management and will manage worker attendance, wages, material usage, grievance reporting, and community audits throughout the project implementation. By embedding local ownership in these committees, the initiative strengthens transparency, accountability, and community resilience. In parallel, the project engages local leaders as champions to support inclusive participation, fostering community acceptance and sustainability of gender-sensitive and equitable livelihood pathways.

The approach is people-centred:

It departs from needs assessments informed by community focus group discussions conducted in seven earthquake affected villages within Inle Lake of Nyaung Shwe township in Shan State in early June 2025. These discussions served to validate the assessment findings and to let priority interventions be shaped by community voices. The insights gathered directly from affected populations were instrumental in informing community-driven job creation and infrastructure recovery strategies, ensuring that interventions reflected local needs, capacities and aspirations. The project implements a context-sensitive approach that prioritizes equitable participation, ensuring that women, persons with disabilities, and internally displaced persons have access to employment and training opportunities.



FINANCING

From seed funding to peace-responsive recovery at scale

The project is implemented under the ILO Initiative on Decent Work for Peace, which leverages ILO internal resources as strategic seed funding for innovative interventions. This ILO-internal resource contribution is intended to attract additional investments from other donors. The project thus serves as a strategic entry point for the ILO's broader engagement in earthquake-affected communities in Myanmar, with a clear focus on leveraging both technical expertise and maximizing the impact of initial financial allocations. It enables the ILO to demonstrate the value of human-centred and job-rich recovery approaches in practice, with the aim of attracting additional financial support from development partners. The visibility and proof of concept generated by this intervention is expected to help mobilize donor interest in expanding support for inclusive recovery, sustainable livelihoods, and decent work. In addition, the project constitutes a basis for sustained ILO support across key thematic areas. By operationalizing core principles of decent work in the early recovery phase - skills development, occupational safety and health (OSH), employment creation, and the promotion of fundamental principles and rights at work (FPRW) – the initiative positions the ILO to support a longer-term transition from immediate recovery to resilience.



Participants going through skills assessment as part of masonry training



Road rehabilitation works

Zooming in on peace and inclusion

This integrated package of emergency assistance, employment-intensive recovery and livelihood support fosters collective action, trust and solidarity among crisis-affected communities, and thereby strengthens social cohesion in Myanmar. By working through representative social partners, community-based organizations and inclusive local institutions such as Village Development Committees, the intervention creates shared spaces for dialogue, joint decision-making and community ownership of recovery efforts. Employment-intensive works bring together women and men from diverse experience and background to rebuild essential infrastructure that benefits entire communities, reinforcing a sense of common purpose and mutual reliance. Special attention has been paid to ensure transparent and community-based beneficiary selection, with decisions communicated publicly to avoid festering sentiments and complaints.

Grievance redress mechanisms have been developed to ensure inclusion. The use of locally driven, resource-based approaches injects income into local economies while strengthening linkages between workers, contractors and community leaders, helping to rebuild confidence in collective solutions at a time of profound uncertainty. Gender-responsive design, grievance redress mechanisms and strong social safeguards further promote fairness, accountability and inclusion, ensuring that recovery efforts reduced tensions rather than exacerbating inequalities. Through these combined efforts, the ILO's support is not only restoring livelihoods and services but also contributing to repairing the social fabric, enhancing resilience and laying foundations for more inclusive and cohesive community recovery across earthquake-affected areas of target regions.



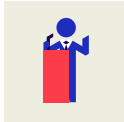
Collective recovery efforts:

Shared activities foster trust, solidarity and social cohesion.



Inclusive dialogue spaces:

Community structures enable participation and joint decision-making



Transparent and fair

processes: Public selection and grievance mechanisms ensure accountability.



Local economic revitalization:

Employment-intensive works inject income and rebuild confidence.

DW4P projects serve to demonstrate the importance of ILO contributions to post-crisis recovery and reconstruction. To support the strengthened position of the ILO in this context, DW4P in Myanmar places strong emphasis on monitoring and evidence generation, including baseline and endline studies. The project engages social partners to monitor activities and continue providing support. UMFCI, the employer organization, is engaged to deliver business coaching to skills training graduates and to individuals who have expressed interest in starting a business and are eligible for in-kind support. Trade union youth will be engaged to provide ongoing follow-up support to communities and to participants involved in income-generating activities.



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