

# Pathein, Myanmar

The City Deal in Pathein takes an **anti-silo and inclusive, multi-stakeholder approach** to addressing sustainable waste and water management for **urban poor communities in flood prone areas**. The effects of annual flooding in low-lying wards with poor inhabitants and informal settlers are severe due to poor housing, inadequate services and waste collection and blocked drainages. The intention is to address this challenge in an integrated manner in several **area-based pilots** with strong involvement of the **local community**, to mobilise different government departments around the various issues facing such a neighbourhood, and to **build Sipin's (municipal) capacity for coordinated interventions**.

## Project activities

- Technical assistance (until 02/21 Pathein Sipin was included)
- Training and coaching on multi-stakeholder cooperation
- Training and coaching on communication and public awareness for inclusive waste management
- Training and coaching on participatory planning and budgeting for inclusive waste management
- Basic governance capacity development on water and waste management
- Technical advice to promote gender mainstreaming throughout the project
- Facilitation and support for pilot projects
- Support to develop and implement multi-stakeholder pilot projects on water and waste management
- Facilitate citizen engagement and awareness for sustainability

[see other side »](#)

## Context

Pathein is Myanmar's 5th largest city. Situated in the heart of the fertile Ayeyarwady Delta, it is a corridor city with a fast growing population, estimated at 380.000 (census 2014). Pathein township is the most urban township in Ayeyarwady Region, hosting the seat of the Regional Government, the biggest Development Affairs Office, several offices of Union Ministries and a finely meshed governmental-administrative network in the 15 wards. Pathein is a rapidly urbanising township with urgent challenges regarding sustainable waste and water management. In addition, Pathein township is confronted with challenges related to spatial planning (land use, housing), social (gender inequality), economic (informality, urban poor, livelihood), health (covid-19) and expansion of illegal settlements. In Pathein, the inclusivity and sustainability of poor urban communities (including informal settlers) around the creeks, small streams and gutters should be collectively addressed by different stakeholders on the initiative of Pathein Township.

For many years before 2015, citizens in Myanmar organised the provision of basic needs and services for themselves, outside the government authorities as these authorities couldn't be trusted nor did people's needs matter. For continued support to the communities in Pathein, the project identified two priority objectives:

- 1) support communities in need addressing basic services
- 2) protect and strengthen the civic space and the resilience of civil society.



- Facilitation of multi-stakeholder meetings
- Facilitation and support for integrated cooperation on sustainability (cooperation with different departments)
- Learning and exchange
- Study visit to the Netherlands (2018)
- Domestic study visits
- On-demand city-to-city learning

## Results

The project aims to reduce environmental impact of and enhanced living conditions for urban poor residents living in flood prone areas in Patheingyi. This is done by providing coaching and advice, facilitating meetings and conducting studies to support the capacity of the Sipin (TDAO/DAC) (pre-coup) and related stakeholders. The project does not provide funds for large infrastructural items. However, small funds are made available for running costs, such as communication costs or small investments.

## Involved parties

DEALS provides support to local, trustworthy CSOs and (informal) groups, who will lead non-state stakeholders to work on citizen-led service delivery. Active participation of youth groups, business companies, different CSOs and community members is key to improve the environmental sanitation situation. The project aligns its activities with other donors active in Yangon (The Asia Foundation, JICA, UN Habitat, Dutch Embassy). Since 1st of February 2021, the situation in Myanmar has changed drastically due to the military coup. In line with the principle of non-engagement with the junta of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Netherlands, the DEALS project has stopped working directly with the local authorities, in particular its main stakeholder the TDAO. It adjusted its integrated, multilevel and multi stakeholders approach to local CSOs and other stakeholders.



## “An uncommon approach! But we are moving to reach common goal.”

**Ms. Naw Htee Ku Paw**, DEALS City Focal Point: An uncommon approach! But we are moving to reach common goal. Since 1st of February 2021 coup, the situation in Myanmar has changed drastically which is impacting the DEALS project. Myanmar has been experiencing massive political and economic turmoil and a deadly third wave of Covid-19 hit the country. DEALS shifted the cooperation to local CSOs and informal groups. A shift towards providing basic needs and capacitating the civic space was adopted to continue

the DEALS action, while no longer actively engaging with or conducting work for the military government. The theory of change in DEALS remains the same, though the focus is shifting from building capacities of local authorities to building capacities of the non-state actors.

The participatory and inclusive approach includes a clear role-assignment to these actors in the current conflict environment while creating civic space to redefine responsibilities in view of changed state-society relations. The newly formed informal groups and the existing CSOs support communities in need and providing services and humanitarian assistance to communities in need, with a focus on strengthening resilience. I see it as a good shift as we can provide the real needs for the citizen while we are facing with terrible political, economic and social situation which hit our country.

