

COOPERATION ON LABOUR MARKET AFFAIRS BETWEEN MYANMAR AND DENMARK

PARTNERING WITH DENMARK – Danish Authorities in International Cooperation



Matching Myanmar Challenges and Demand with Danish Competences

In 2011, Myanmar initiated a comprehensive reform process aimed at achieving a transition to a more democratic, market-based and socially equal society.

Since then, Myanmar's economy has seen impressive growth rates. It is widely accepted, however, that one of the prerequisites for continued strong growth is continued progress on structural reforms, including on labour market institutions. Such institutions are particularly crucial in fostering inclusive and sustainable economic growth, and in turn an enabling business environment. Decent jobs, including safe and healthy working conditions and sound industrial relations are important framework conditions for fostering foreign investment and export-led economic development.

Currently, labour market institutions remain very weak in Myanmar, and improvements require attention across three axes: Further reform of the legal framework, support to the institutions responsible for implementing and enforcing the new laws, and building the capacity of labour market actors to effectively engage in social dialogue. The new democratically elected government has committed to further reforms.

Denmark is known as a first-mover and pioneer country in the field of occupational safety and health (OSH). Moreover, Denmark has a proven track record of combining the promotion of workers' rights with high productivity and economic growth through a particularly well-developed model of social dialogue.

SAFER AND HEALTHIER WORK PLACES AND IMPROVED SOCIAL DIALOGUE IN MYANMAR

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Key Activities

On 9 June and 7 July 2015, respectively, the Myanmar Union Minister for Labour and the Danish Minister for Employment signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that laid the foundation for strategic sector cooperation (SSC) on labour market affairs. A growth counsellor has been recruited and posted to the Embassy of Denmark in Myanmar from September 2015. A SSC preparation project has been concluded. Subsequently, a full SSC project was approved in March 2016 with a focus on: 1) strengthening capacity of the Factories and General Labour Laws Inspection Department (FGLLID) to advice on, implement and enforce the OSH legal framework; 2) Improving OSH legislation to facilitate transparent, uniform and effective enforcement of the OSH legal framework, and the practice of social dialogue; 3) Improving social dialogue

Milestones and Early Results by Mid-2016

The SSC preparation project, which focused on OSH in the garment sector, included two one-week pilot training sessions for newly recruited OSH inspectors. The trainings were extremely successful, and a lesson drawn was that the peer-to-peer training is a particular strength.

The Danish Ambassador and the growth counsellor have held several meetings with Myanmar trade unions and the main employers' organization in order to prepare the launch of the capacity building activities on social dialogue in September 2016.

Generally, the posting of the Growth Counsellor and the activities carried out during the preparation project have build-up an excellent working relationship with the management of the FGLLID.

A visit by the Danish Minister for Employment is scheduled to take place in September 2016.

SSC Status: Full SSC Project approved March 2016. Expected project period is until October 2018.

SSC Partners:

Myanmar: Factories and General Labour Laws Inspection Department (FGLLID) under the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population; Agricultural and Farmers' Federation of Myanmar; Confederation of Trade Unions of Myanmar; Myanmar Industry, Commerce and Services Federation; the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce.

Denmark: Ministry of Employment, the Danish Working Environment Authority

See [website](#) & [guidelines](#) for more information on the Partnering with Denmark Initiative and the 2015-16 Annual Report.