



Fast Facts

Country: Myanmar

Duration: April 2003 to September 2004

Implementing UN Agencies: UNODC

Other Implementing Partners: Myanmar Agriculture Service; Wa Agriculture Bureau

Budget: \$1,203,935.07

Key Words: Agricultural development; food security; poppy eradication; rural communities;

BACKGROUND

The Wa Special Region No. 2 (WSR) of Myanmar is home to the Wa ethnic group and is located in the remote and mountainous area of eastern Shan State on Myanmar's border with China. The region is characterized by poor physical infrastructure, with most of the villages isolated and without access to health care and education. In addition, the region's farmers have depended on opium poppy production for their basic livelihoods for more than 100 years and the region is one of the main sources for opium

poppy produced in the Shan State. Historically, one of the reasons for poppy cultivation was the chronic food insecurity and the farmers' dependence on rice to secure their survival. However, yields from rice production only covered 6 to 8 months of the yearly food requisites and to buy rice during the remaining months, people cultivated and sold opium poppy. Therefore, eradicating poppy production could only succeed if an alternative and viable means of survival could be offered to the communities.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The project aimed to support the ongoing poppy-eradication plan to eliminate poppy cultivation in WSR by increasing rice production yields for impoverished and food insecure farmers. Targeting the Mong Tar Township of WSR, the

project (i) built a canal system for flatland rice paddies; and (ii) provided farmers with crucial education and training to secure food through a double-crop model of rice production.

BENEFICIARIES

The primary beneficiaries were farmers of Mong Tar Township of WSR who benefited from increased food security through the introduction of a new canal system, the cultivation of rice paddies and the related infrastructure. After the construction of the canal system, local rice

cultivation saw a permanent increase of more than 2,000 metric tons per year, which generated food stability as well as surplus rice that could be used as an alternative source of income in the affected communities.